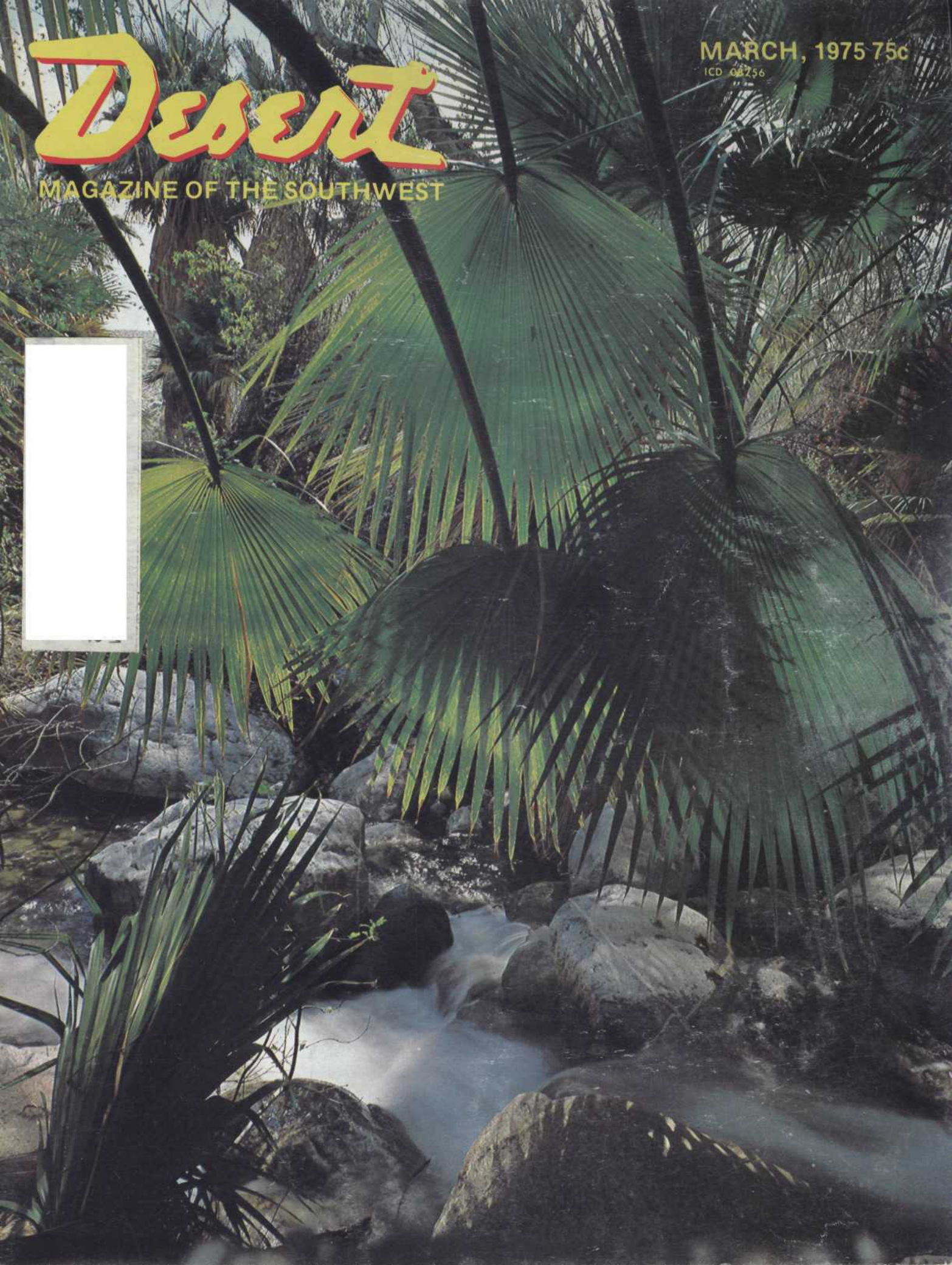


Desert

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IN THE PHOTO ABOVE, BOB MARX, LEFT AND BILL MAHAN, JR., INSPECT AND DISCUSS THE NEW CUSTOM BUILT UNDERWATER DETECTOR BUILT ESPECIALLY FOR BOB MARX.

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Volume 38, Number 3

MARCH 1975

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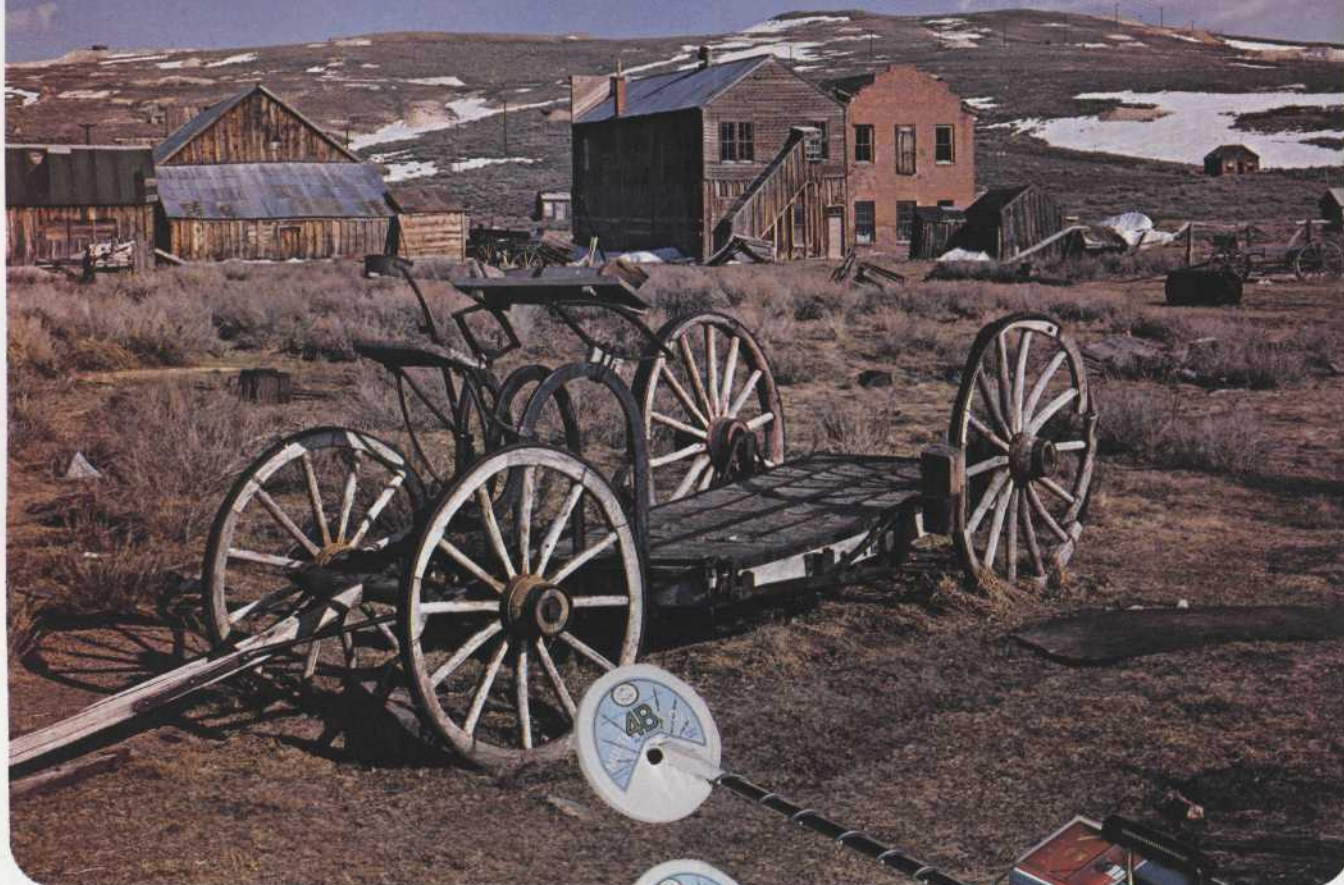
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THE KING'S HIGHWAY
IN BAJA CALIFORNIA
By Harry Crosby

A book that takes the reader by mule-back over the rugged spine of the Baja California peninsula along an historic path created by the first Spanish padres, who pitted their strength and wits against a land of forbidding obstacles.

Only fragments of the original road remain today, and the King's Highway lies for the most part off the beaten track of today's auto roads. Laid down by the padres, the road was later followed by European settlers, early explorers and gold-seeking '49ers. Then it faded and fell into disuse. This story brings to light the first penetration of the old trail in more than a hundred years, especially in the central highlands.

Only a mule can follow the traces of this ancient road across arid plateaus, over volcanic hills and down through overpowering gorges. Photographer-writer Harry Crosby, with a student of Jesuit history in Mexico, made the long and tiring, but rewarding, journey. This book is the result of the original adventure and Crosby's subsequent visits to many remote areas of the peninsula.

It is both a personal adventure and a recounting of vital history, bringing into

focus the unhappy efforts to introduce Christianity to an Indian population far off the mainstream of ancient life. It tells of the life and death of the old Jesuit missions.

It describes how the first European settlers were lured into the mountains, along the same road, to remain and raise their families, tend their little ranchos and also wait out the centuries.

El Camino Real is a route of many scenic adventures through mountain regions and desert wastes. These are presented in magnificent photographs by Harry Crosby, many in striking color. New revelations along the trail are prehistoric cave paintings by native inhabitants, who predated the Indians met by the earliest Europeans.

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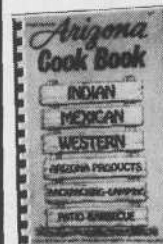


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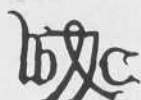
THERE'S A MARMOT ON THE TELEPHONE

Joe Van Wormer

Floogie, the yellow bellied marmot, came into Joe Van Wormer's life when the man rescued the baby animal from a five gallon milk can. From his first place of repose in the author's sweater pocket, to his adoption by the Van Wormer family, this warmhearted story portrays an appealing relationship between a human being and the wild creature who came to trust and live with him and his family.

Illustrated with 33 photographs by the author.

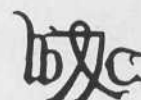
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BOOKS OF

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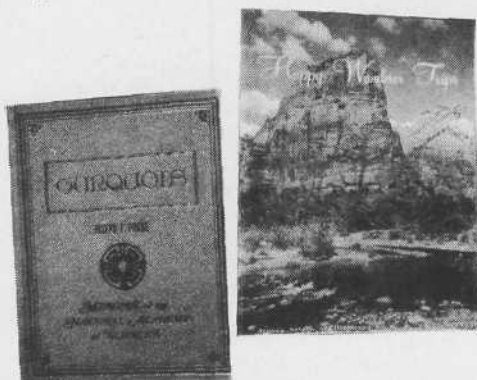
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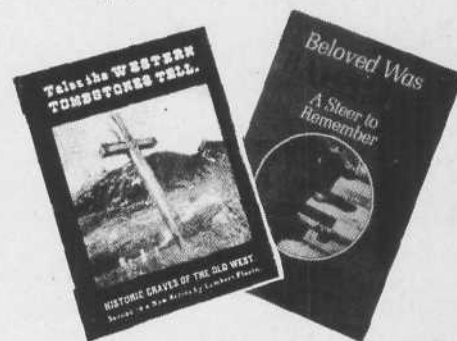
TURQUOIS by Joseph E. Pogue. [Memoirs of the National Academy of Sciences]. First printed in 1915, *Turquoise* has in its third printing (1973) been updated in many ways. Among them are listed currently-operated Turquoise mines, more color plates. The book is full of incredible results of research and an in-depth study of this fascinating mineral of superficial origin. Hardcover, 175 pages, beautifully illustrated, \$15.00.

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NEW BAJA HANDBOOK for the Off-Pavement Motorist in Lower California by James T. Crow. Discover the real Baja that lies beyond the edge of the paved road, the unspoiled, out-of-the-way places unknown to the credit-card tourist. The author, drawing from his extensive travels in these parts, tells where to go, what to take along, the common sense of getting ready. Illustrated, paperback, 95 pages, \$3.95.

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THE BAJA BOOK, A Complete Map-Guide to Today's Baja California by Tom Miller and Elmar Baxter. Waiting until the new transpeninsular highway opened, the authors have pooled their knowledge to give every minute detail on gas stations, campgrounds, beaches, trailer parks, road conditions, boating, surfing, flying, fishing, beachcombing, in addition to a Baja Roadlog which has been broken into convenient two-mile segments. A tremendous package for every kind of recreationist. Paperback, 178 pages, illus., maps, \$7.95.

WILY WOMEN OF THE WEST by Grace Ernestine Ray. Such women of the West as Belle Starr, Cattle Kate and Lola Montez weren't all good and weren't all bad, but were fascinating and conflicting personalities, as researched by the author. Their lives of adventure were a vital part of the life of the Old West. Hardcover, illustrated, 155 pages, \$7.95.

Little Fenner Valley

by MARY FRANCES STRONG

Photos by Jerry Strong



UNLESS THE landscape is carefully scrutinized from an elevated vantage point, little Fenner Valley is lost in the vastness of its larger namesake and the huge, trough-like Bristol-Lanfair Basin. Neatly encircled by low ranges of hills, this 170-square-mile valley on the eastern edge of California's Great Mojave Desert, is not as well known as it should be.

The valley is easily reached via Interstate 40 and the paved, Old National Trails Road to Goffs. From this point, Lanfair Road provides ready access to historical sites, old mines and amply endowed gem fields. Little Fenner Valley offers rewarding adventure for the desert enthusiast.

Goffs is the "jumping off" point for sampling the charms of this arid region. Once the junction of several desert trails, it became an important siding in 1883 when the Atlantic and Pacific Railroad (now Santa Fe) was completed across the Mojave Desert. Sporting a two-story station and turntable for helper engines that pulled trains up the long grade from Needles, Goffs Siding also developed into a busy shipping point for mines in the surrounding districts.

Never a large community, Goffs' pop-

ulation has fluctuated with the tides of mining and railroading over the past 90 years. A near population explosion occurred in early 1893 when Isaac Blake began construction of his "brain child"—the Nevada Southern Railway. The first, completed section ran from Goffs north to Manvel in the New York Mountains. Additional plans called for its extension through the mountains and eventually into Southern Nevada, possibly as far as Pioche.

Blake hoped the numerous mines in this immense region would utilize his railroad as well as his new mill (Needles Reduction Co.) at Needles. His dream was to turn Needles into an "Ore Milling Center." Dreams are not often fulfilled and, as mining booms are prone to do, the "bust" was on its way!

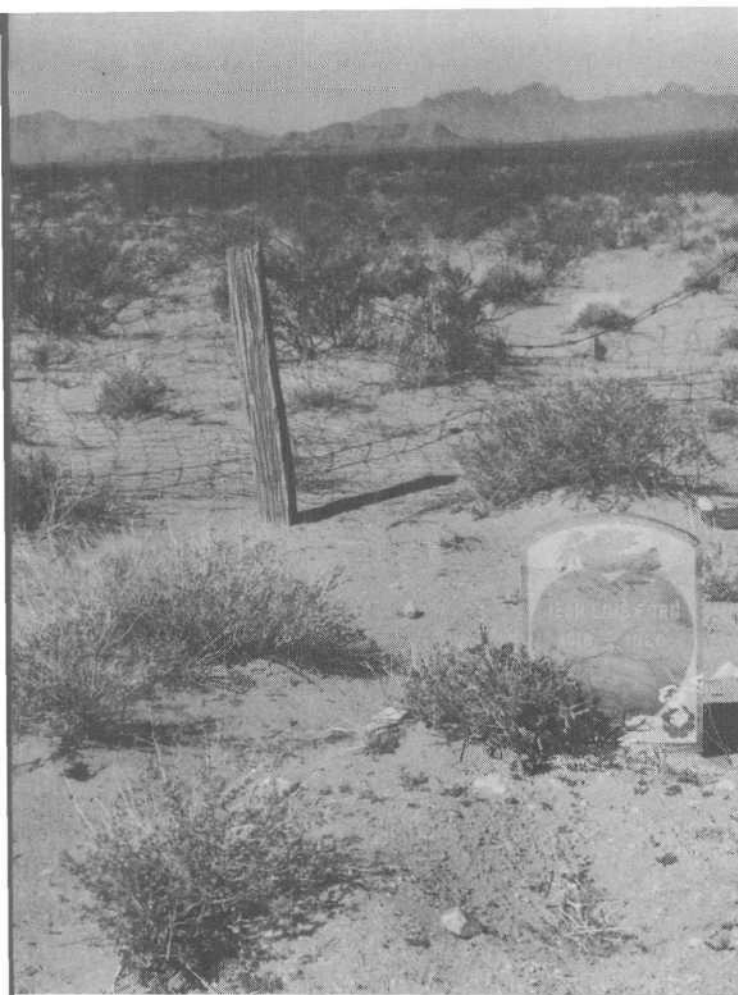
Richness of the ore at Vanderbilt and the Vontrigger had not lived up to expectations. When the railroad started operations in September 1893, only a handful of men were working in the mines. Blake's financial problems increased and the planned expansions did not materialize. Just over a year later, on December 23, 1894, the Nevada Southern Railway went into receivership.

Revived by new owners as the Califor-

nia Eastern Railway, the line continued to operate on a small scale for several years. This changed in 1899 when rich ores were discovered at the Copper World Mine, 30 miles north of end-of-track. To accommodate the new business, rails were extended into Ivanpah Valley and three years later, the Santa Fe purchased the little line. Business eventually slackened, the line was shortened, fewer runs made; and, in 1923, the California Eastern Railway was abandoned.

Goffs Siding has withstood the changing times. Homesteaders and ranchers tried their luck—not too successfully—while a number of mines operated spasmodically through the years. With the coming of automobile travel, Goffs became a supply point along the original Old National Trails Road, though its vigor as a settlement was waning. People moved away, the school closed and the railroad station was torn down. Only the small store and a few cabins have valiantly kept it from becoming a "ghost siding."

Today, there seems to be a resurgence of interest in Goffs. Most of the cabins and several trailers were occupied in the Spring of 1973. While we were there, a



Left: The small cemetery at Goffs has only two marked graves—one a soldier with the 16th Kansas Cavalry, the other a young child. Below: Hackberry Wash provides access to several veins of good cutting material which occur in the white horizon just below the dark outcropping ledges above the pickup. The arrow points to diggings where we removed beautiful red, golden-yellow, and green jasp-agate.

new family moved in. The little general store, run by friendly Margaret and John Cahill, is a combination limited-grocery, bar and gas station. It is open every day except Thursday from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. for the convenience of residents, ranchers and miners, plus an occasional recreationist.

Following Lanfair Road north from Goffs, the photogenic old school house is quickly passed. Its architecture is a surprise in a region of largely frame cabins. Gradually climbing the gentle slope of the broad alluvial valley, the pavement is soon replaced by a good, graded road. The former railbed of the Nevada Southern Railway follows this general route about a half-mile west, but it is not visible from the road.

Eight miles north, a well-defined, bladed road will be seen on the left. It leads four miles west to a talc mine which appears to have been a rather recent operation. The deposit is quite colorful—blue, green and pink—with several adits and a large dump. Evidently, the ore was screened on the property prior to shipment.

However, the mine road has another important function. It leads to the old railbed and gives access to Vontrigger

Siding—the loading point from the Vontrigger Mine, three miles east.

Long before the railroad crossed the desert, prospectors had roamed the region via shank's mare and burro. A number of important discoveries had been made. Probably one of the earliest claims was the Vontrigger in the northeast corner of Little Fenner Valley. Located as a placer deposit in 1858, it has had a long career, first as a gold prospect, then as a copper mine in 1891.

Though a series of operators tried many methods for recovering the values during the past 80 years, their attempts have not proven very profitable. It was only after 18 years of development that the first ore was shipped—29 tons assaying 8.87 percent copper. A leaching plant, then a 160-ton mill to separate gold by cyanidation and copper by electrolysis, were among the failures. The mine is patented property but has not been posted during the various times we have visited it over the past 20 years. Its mention here is not permission to trespass on private property.

Evidence at Vontrigger Siding seems to indicate considerable ore was hauled





For over two decades, rockhounds have pounded on this huge boulder of cutting material in an attempt to break off specimens. It lies in Hackberry Wash and will give new collectors an idea of "what to look for."

to the railway and not shipped. Several ore piles remain and copper specimens have been scattered by flood waters in Hackberry Wash for a considerable distance south.

Exploration of Vontrigger Siding revealed evidence of far more occupation than would be normal for just a siding. Quite possibly, it was the site of a main camp during construction of the railroad. We counted nearly a dozen building sites—some on the hillsides, others in the wash—all east of the railbed.

Attention bottle hunters. We also came across two, undug chic-sale sites. Evidently, we are not dedicated bottle collectors because we draw the line at digging in outhouses—even though that is where "the best bottles" are reported-

ly found!

Until you get out and walk around Vontrigger Siding, only the overgrown railbed (now a faint, two-track road) and two, widely separated telephone poles seem to mark the site. However, either a great deal of beer and booze was delivered via railroad to individuals at the siding or there must have been a small saloon. Piles of broken bottles and a great deal of interesting memorabilia have been left behind. A few places have been dug. If you dig, please remember to fill the holes.

The original route from mine to siding is well-defined and can be used today. However, the dropoff down the high bank into the wash may be a bit rough for stock cars. Using the talc mine road,

then following the railbed north a half-mile, is the easiest route. Both roads are shown on the map—so take your choice.

Four miles farther north, Hackberry Wash—a sizable drainage channel coming out of Lanfair Valley—makes a loop through a narrow pass in the hills. On the west is Hackberry Mountain—long a good rock collecting locale for a variety of cutting material. In recent years, several new deposits have been located on the southern flanks of the mountain. Collectors who are willing to "hike the hills" are generally rewarded.

A good, open campsite will be found on the left just beyond the second crossing of Hackberry Wash. See map. It is a dry camp and o.k. for trailers.

From the campground, look toward the cliffs across the wash and you will see a number of "diggings" where veins of jasp-agate and common opal occur. The best material lies below the dark horizon in gray, compacted ash. Hard rock mining is required to obtain the very attractive material.

I will never understand why some rockhounds will rush over to a deposit, pound the vein with hammer or sledge then complain, "this stuff is all fractured." It takes patience and work to remove good cutting material. What's the rush? Rock collecting is a hobby and only a few pieces of quality material is required.

The jasp-agate is a combination of red, golden-yellow, green, beige and black jasper in milky to almost transparent agate. So far, only one vein of pistachio-green opal seems to have been uncovered. It will add variety of color to a cabochon collection. Both materials are slightly brittle and must be carefully removed from the veins to avoid fractures.

When talking about Hackberry Wash, I always hasten to discuss the petrified reed we have collected. As yet, I have not met anyone else who has some specimens. They may be overlooked due to their color. The reeds have been well-replaced by bluish-white opal and they are beautiful when polished. Tons of opal are eroding on the northwestern slope of Hackberry Mountain. Not all of it contains reeds, but finding one good specimen is worth the effort of looking at dozens.

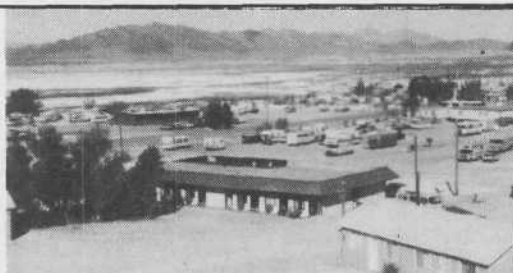
Petrified palm wood, plus unidentified wood specimens, occur at Hackberry

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Mountain. Watch for small limb sections with light-beige exteriors and centers of dark, translucent agate. They are no longer plentiful but may still be found by hiking away from the main collecting area. Occasionally, some fine, opalized wood (milky-white, often with colorful inclusions) will be found in the ash.

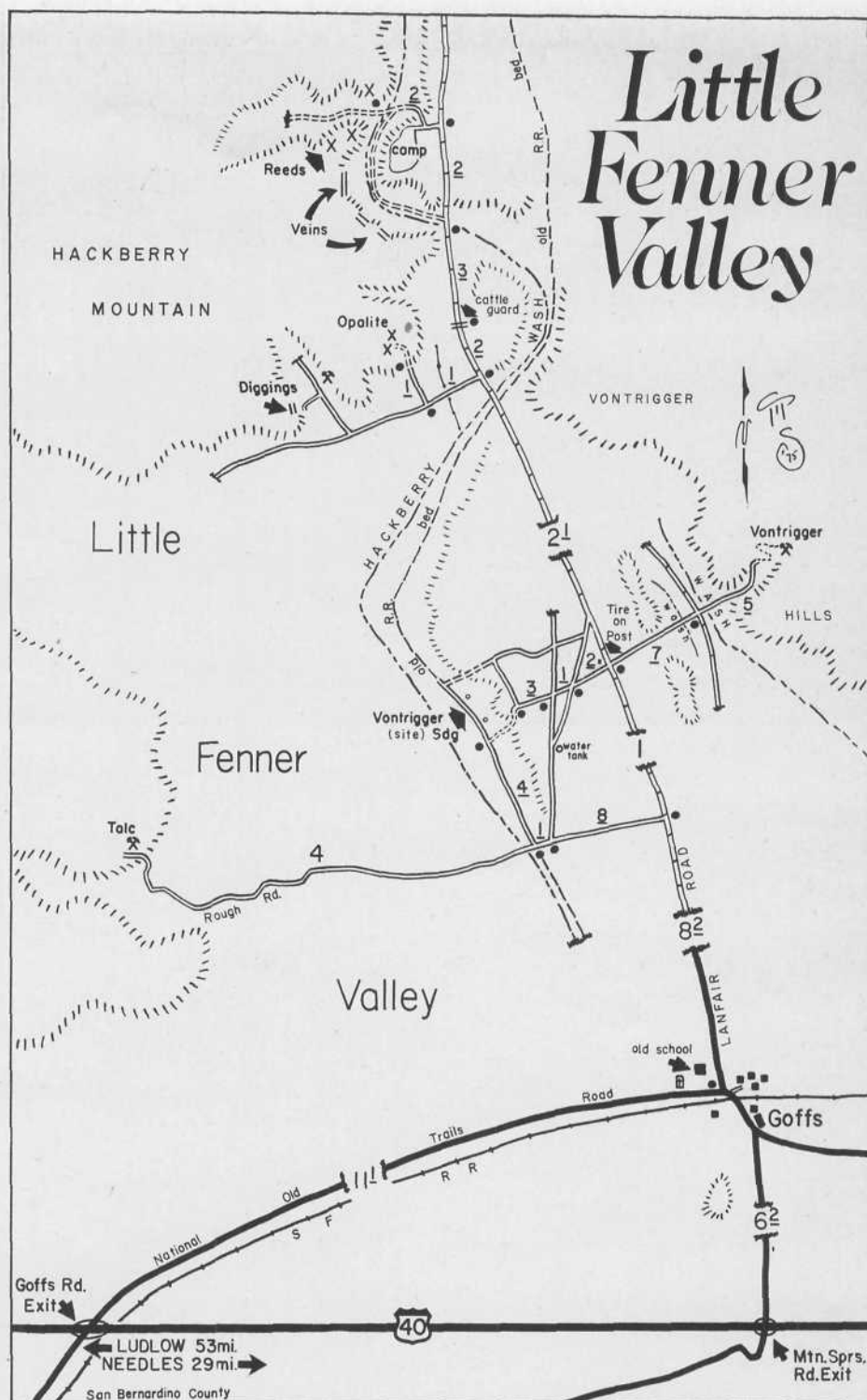
Other materials to look for include milky, moss and dendritic opal, plus vari-colored agate and chalcedony. Chunks of discarded material will be seen in the campgrounds. They will give new collectors some idea of what may be found here. Naturally, it will not be of the best quality and it is doubtful there will be any wood specimens.

A half-mile southwest of the campground lies a large deposit of opalite in veins from one to six inches wide. Some of the veins appear to have been cracked by earth movement. Not brilliantly colored, this material is, nevertheless, quite interesting. Patterns include brecciated and banded. The colors are muted tones of brown, beige, red, orange, pink and rarely, deep purple. There is plenty of opalite here but specimens should be selected carefully.

The main road, leading into the area from Lanfair Road (see map) continues westerly around the base of the mountain. It gives access to several mines and is used regularly by cattlemen. We wandered out this way and came across a diggings, high on the side of a hill. Petrified wood is reported to have been collected at this location, but we saw no evidence of any. Perhaps the compact, metamorphic banding of this material has been confused or interpreted as petrified wood. Maybe we were on the wrong hill! It is embarrassing to admit, but I forgot to take the mileage on the way out. So—here is a possible "lost collecting site" that can easily be found.

Speaking of ranchers, considerable cattle are grazed in Little Fenner Valley and two rules of the range must be observed. No Hunting and No Camping around windmills or water troughs. Range cattle often travel many miles to quench their thirst. Though they may not have drunk for several days and sorely need it, cattle will not come in if you are camped by the troughs or along their trails.

October through May is the best season for visiting this corner of the Mojave Desert. In years such as 1973, when a



little extra rain has fallen, spring will bring a brilliant array of wildflower

The Valley is in Area 23 (East Mojave) under the Bureau of Land Management's Desert Management Plan. It is designated as "Restricted to Designated Roads and Trails for Vehicular Use." However, until designation is accomplished and maps made available, vehicular travel is limited to "Existing Roads and Trails." There should be no conflict in using the roads shown on the accompanying map.

Little Fenner Valley is one of the Great

Mojave Desert's hidden treasures. Its values lie in the vast expanse of open space, the clear, dry air and the opportunities for outdoor recreation. Though the mines are idle and the Nevada Southern Railway only a memory, the desert enthusiast may still follow old trails, visit former camp sites and nostalgically recall what we like to think of as "the good old days." Because of the foreboding times in which we now live, inner strength may be gained by visiting historical sites and relating to our proud and respected heritage.

The Dale Mining District

LOCATION: The Dale Mining District is located approximately 18 miles east of Twentynine Palms, California, south of California Highway 62, and north of Joshua Tree National Monument.

BRIEF HISTORY: Placer gold was first discovered at Dale Dry Lake, and in the Black Mountains (an eastern extension of the Pintos), in 1883. Placer operations proved profitable, and a small rush created the community of Dale. It is

A collapsing house at the Supply Mine. The Supply reached its peak of activity between 1914 and 1917 when it was oper-

ated by Charles Schwab's United Greenwater Company. The Supply reportedly produced more than \$2 million in gold.



said the town was named for Virginia Dale, the first child born there. It is also reported that the population reached nearly 1,000.

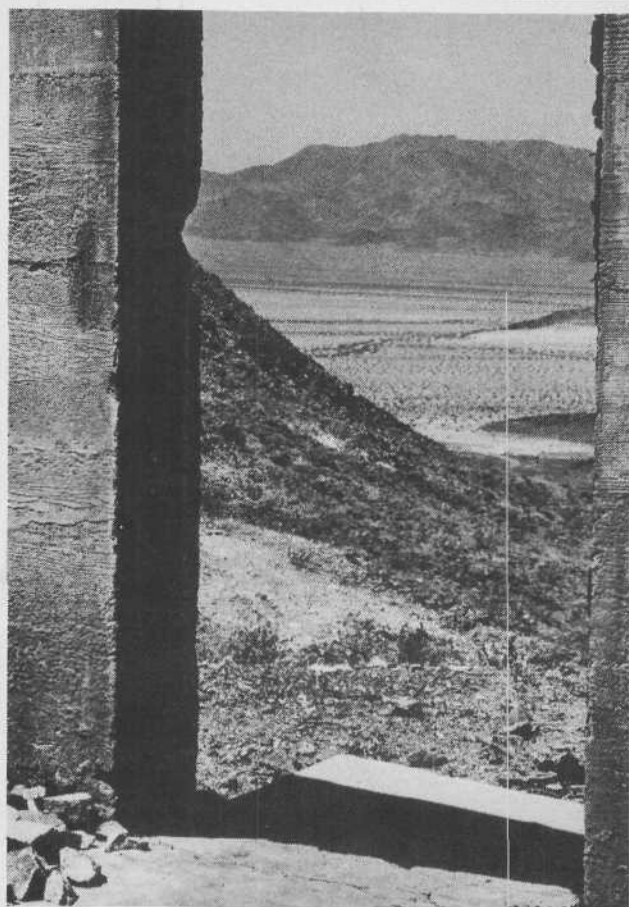
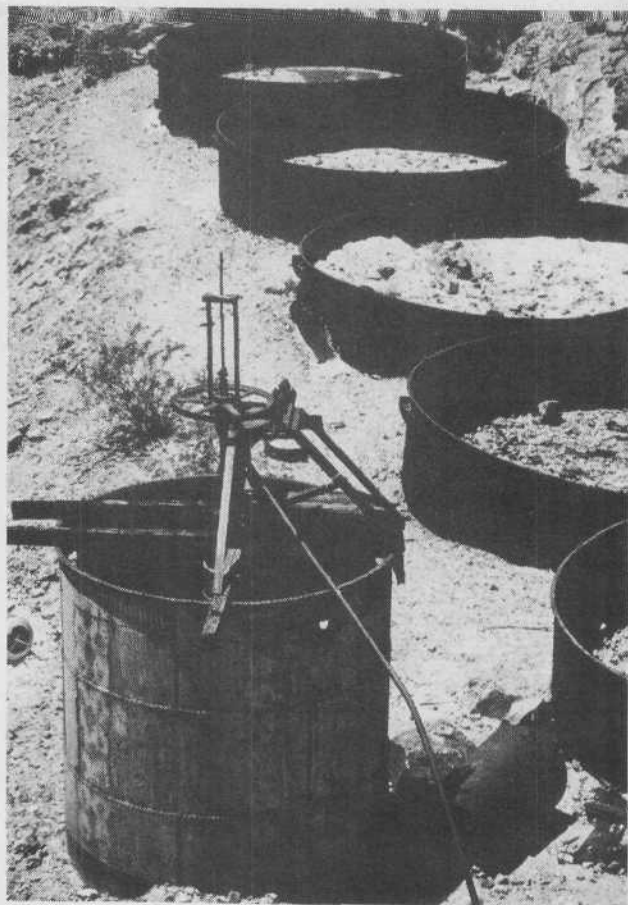
Dale proved to be a town on the move. Most of the buildings were really tents, and could easily be transported to new locations. The first site, now called Old Dale, was near the present intersection of Highway 62 and Gold Crown Road. The second location (Dale the Second) was four miles south at the Virginia Dale Mine, the first major mine in the area, discovered in 1885. Water was piped from Old Dale, and both mining and milling operations were established.

When Dale moved again, the Supply Mine, the richest in the district, was the reason. New Dale (Dale the Third) was located nearly two miles southeast of the Virginia Dale Mine, and became the largest of the three Dales.

On the mountain, overlooking New Dale, extensive mining facilities were set up at the Supply Mine. Several million dollars worth of gold was mined. The most profitable operations took place during the years between 1914 and 1917 when the Supply was operated by the United Greenwater Company, headed by financier Charles Schwab. Both the Supply Mine, and the Virginia Dale Mine, were worked intermittently until shortly before World War II.

VISITING DALE TODAY: Traveling east on California Highway 62, it is best to check your odometer at the eastern edge of Twentynine Palms. When you have traveled about 14 miles, you will find a relatively wide, graded, dirt road heading south. This, though probably unmarked, is Gold Crown Road. The site of Old Dale is just north of the intersection. None of your present buildings date from the 1880's. Traveling south you will see the site of the Virginia Dale Mine, approximately four miles from the intersection, in the hills to the east. The mine is an easy walk from the road. Here you will find cyanide tanks and other remnants of both mining and milling. Continuing south, and then east, along Gold Crown Road for another mile or so, you will find nothing remains of New Dale, but you will spot buildings and other remains of the Supply Mine high on a ridge to the north. The road to the mine is a Jeep trail, but if you do not have four-wheel-drive, the hike is not difficult. At the mine you will find walls, foundations and sidewalks that attest to the population and to the activity of a bygone period of desert history.

Upper right: Cyanide tanks remain at the Virginia Dale Mine. In these tanks a cyanide compound was mixed with finely milled ore. Gold was dissolved and the solution drawn off for processing. John Wilson and Tom Lyons discovered the mine in 1885. Right: The site of the Supply Mine sits high on a ridge overlooking the basin and the Pinto Mountains. Remnants of mining and milling operations remain in addition to walls, foundations, sidewalks, and other evidence of earlier years of prosperity.





Photos by Jim Cornett

Desert Toad

by K. L. BOYNTON

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IN HIS warty way, *Bufo punctatus*, the desert toad, is something of a celebrity. True enough, for a toad, he's small, being only one and one-half to three inches long. By toad standards, too, he may not be considered portly enough, since he is slender and rather flat in shape. But when it comes to being flashily attired, who in the desert can rival him? Each of his warts is capped with a spot of red, sometimes enhanced further by being set in a circle of black. Gaudy enough when dry, he's a dazzler when wet, seemingly bejeweled with rubies. He is also a minstrel of reknown, a singer of songs in the spring, or any old time when it's warm enough and there's enough water.

Now while this fellow is highly adapted to desert life, he is still an amphibian and as such only a jump away from the old watery life of his ancestors. Thin-skinned, he is particularly subject to desiccation, losing body water fast by evap-

oration. And, because he can't control the temperature of his body, his life is dictated by the weather about him, a fact that is bound to make things harder. Thus, he really shouldn't chance living in a desert at all, and certainly not in his homesites among the rocky hillsides and arid canyons where conditions are so bad even his cousin, the doughty spadefoot toad, can't make a go of it.

The thing is that *Bufo punctatus* doesn't know this and hence in succeeding to do so, has engaged the attentions of many a scientist determined to learn how in the desert he does it.

Two main problems, it seems, face this little toad.

Number one is how to keep himself alive. Behavioral tactics developed through the ages help here. In the event of lethal cold, heat or prolonged drought conditions, he takes himself out of circulation, working his slender body deep down into a crevice, or flattened out still more, squeezes far back under a big rock. Safely tucked away, he can await better times.

His answer for staving off dessication is mainly physiological. That thin skin of his, while a drawback in losing water fast, can, on the other hand, take aboard water quickly. This is particularly so in a special area, thoughtfully set aside by nature, on the undersides of his legs and body. Always in contact with the ground when the toad is sitting naturally, this highly absorbent seat patch works like blotting paper, picking up soil moisture no matter how little there is to be had. Also at work is a built-in water response system under hormonal control which assists in keeping a proper body water balance. In time of high heat and evaporation, it steps up the speed of water intake of the skin, and decreases the amount of urine excreted. His bladder also acts as a storage tank for water that can be re-sorbed in times of dehydration stress.

Basically, these desert toads can endure greater body water loss than their relatives among the humid land dwellers. They can also tolerate higher concentrations of urea in their blood and tissues caused by lack of water. Both these factors enable them to be active under severe desert conditions topside and to spend long periods underground. In fact, in times of extended drought, the toads may not come out at all during the year.

Problem Number two is a bad one:



how to keep up the old clan numbers in the face of such rotten conditions? Independent of water as these desert toads are, they cannot escape their amphibian heritage. They have to have standing water to lay their eggs in and this water has to be around long enough for the hatching tadpoles to mature. If the water dries up before the magical transformation of tadpole into toadlet can take place, the whole batch is lost.

Biologist Lloyd Tevis set about finding out how the red-spotted citizens of Deep Canyon, California, made out, for here is just about as rugged a spot for tadpole raising as a toad wouldn't ask for. The scant water is almost entirely compliments of run-off down the desert slopes of the Santa Rosa mountains. In the upper part of the canyon, there are fairly permanent pools seepage fed, and hence bouncing populations of *punctatus*. The lower end of the canyon, however, gets the tail end of the spring water flow and while there may be a short-lived stream there, or at times even a sudden major

flood, it is dry much of the year. In some years, there is no water there at all. It all depends on what happens upstairs weatherwise in the Santa Rosas. Yet, in good times and bad, *punctatus* resides also in the lower canyon. So Tevis captured 93 individuals, marked and released them, and set about keeping his records.

The opening gun in the *punctatus* social season is a whooptedoo songfest commenced in the spring as soon as the air temperature hits 70 degrees. The gentlemen, having emerged from winter hibernation earlier and being well hydrated from sitting about in the water waiting for the air to warm up, now take up calling stations at selected points along the stream and let loose with song. *Punctatus* is a tenor, his voice two octaves above middle C. Loud and long is his trilling song, his vocal cords twanging away, the sound amplified by a resonating sac inflated to a big round balloon under his chin.

Very important is this song of his and

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its very loudness, too. It must reach the ears of the distant ladies and bring them hopping to spots along the stream best for the eggs: where shallow water moves slowly over sand and they will not be swirled away by rapids, or banged with tumbling stones. From dusk to early A.M., the desert canyon rocks with *punctatus* song, and egg laying proceeds apace. The main push is over in a few days, with some 90 percent of the eggs now laid. Yet, in checking, Tevis found that only about one-fifth of his marked and gravid females had bred. Not that the troubadours had given up, for indeed many were still at it, weeks later, hopefully trilling away from dusk to dawn.

Once laid, the eggs hatch in two or three days, and the brand new tadpoles need 40-60 days to mature. Time is of the essence and the clan has developed some very good angles to speed up this critical period.

The tadpoles are black and consequently absorb heat faster than light-colored ones, important because more heat, faster metabolism, and so faster growth. Behavior tactics help, too. The newly-hatched tads aggregate into a tight

group, swimming constantly but always in the very shallow stream edge by day where the water temperature is the highest. At night they go to deeper water which is warmer after sundown. A couple of weeks old, with the water level shrinking about them, they congregate on the bottom, feeding on organic debris and there they are less liable to be caught in small isolated pools as the stream retreats further and further. The final phase of their watery life is the chanciest, for now they are beginning to develop legs and other toad appurtenances and so the tads go back to the shallow edges again, this time to spend the days with their backs out of water, soaking up as much heat as possible.

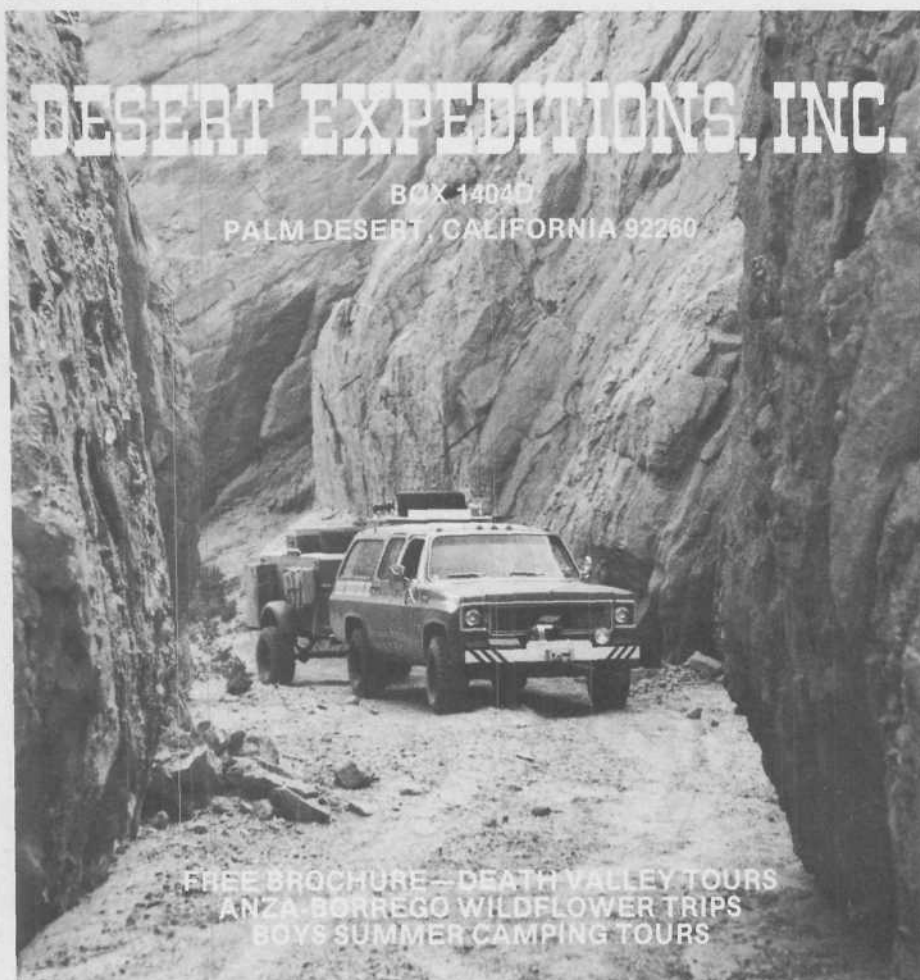
What with these tadpole tricks and hopefully with the later lasting, they make it to toadlets—youngsters gayly spotted with orange, who hop away from water now to their new life on dry land.

Things don't always turn out so well. In fact, not one tadpole in Tevis' early batch made it, the Santa Rosas failing to keep up the water supply long enough. Everything dried up and all toads disappeared from the scene.

Later in the summer, there still was no rain, but a great flash flood swirled down through the canyon, the water coming from the mountains miles away. Still — out came the toads, dry and sorry looking, but hopping determinedly towards the stream to sit and hydrate. In no time at all, the singing commenced. *Punctatus*, in short, is an opportunistic breeder with no set season, given the right air temperature and water, the minstrels sing and the ladies come, part of that backlog of non-breeding but ready females available since so few had bred in the spring.

And now here was a question: There was no rain, but a flash flood that brought the water, so how did the aestivating toads in their underground retreats far from the stream location know there was water in the canyon again? Biologists don't have the answer, but maybe Indians do, for the Zunis have long employed the talents of these red-spotted toads in certain rain-making ceremonies.

Anyhow, and unhappily to report, the second big songfest also ended in tadpole disaster, the year's net gain for the clan in that spot being zero. But, again, the *punctatus* toads have an ace in the



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hole, as Tevis' records showed. Five of his marked toads were recaptured four years later, still on deck, still flourishing. With longevity like this, and with good years bound to come some time, the clan keeps in business.

The *punctatus* bunch are individualists, too, the adults not all reacting in the same way. Some, for instance, followed the water as the stream dried up, migrating to the head of the canyon and joining the resident toads there in the permanent seep pools. But others went underground right where they were, geared physiologically to wait out the hard times. Parlaying their numbers out in different solutions is a kind of insurance against total ruin by the same kind of disaster, an excellent adaptation for desert living.

The toads that followed the receding water and migrated upcanyon remained to provide some genetic exchange, a clan vitalizer. The situation among the toads in Death Valley studied by Zoologist Frederick Turner, however, is different, as they live in quite isolated populations. The Cow Creekers, for example, probably derived from the Nevares Spring toads, ran about eight to an acre with a maximum recapture range of about 1200 feet. The toads seemed to shuffle back and forth within this. Considerable distance away were populations at Furnace Creek Ranch probably from those at Texas Spring, and another at the Inn originating, perhaps, from the population at Travertine Spring. There would be little chance for genetic exchange between these populations unless there were major floods, and these, of course, would carry the toads only downstream. The populations at the heads of the canyons would get no new numbers this way and with flood water, the distances between the isolated populations are too great for migration.

Interesting enough, the first *punctatus* to make its bow to science was discovered in Death Valley in 1891. The populations there are relics of the old wet Pleistocene days when the Valley was the scene of Lake Manly, and *punctatus* ancestors lived all around its edges. Those were the easy times. But today's red-spotted numbers, equipped as they are with survival techniques developed in the ensuing years, are quite likely to be decorating the desert scene for a long time to come. □

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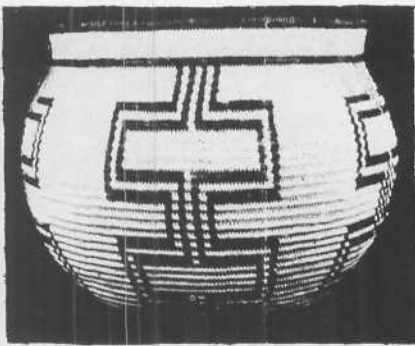
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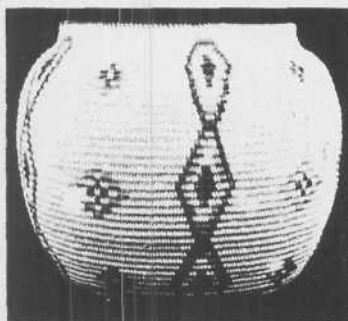
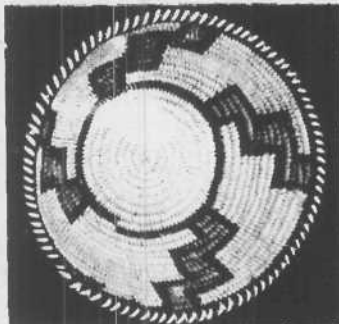
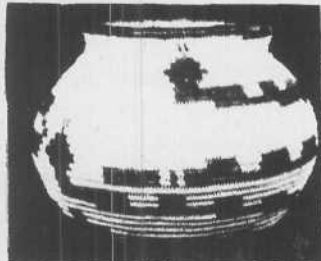
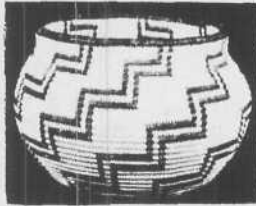
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by GEORGIA LAIRD CULP



Editor's Note: With the hue and cry of special interest groups over desert land use, it seems appropriate to highlight the struggles of a small tribe of desert Indians whose land was declared public domain back in 1853.

THE CHEMEHUEVI Indian Reservation lies along the western shore of Havasu Lake, in San Bernardino County, California. These 28,233 desert acres are all that remain of the ancient heartland of the Chemehuevi people.

Until the coming of the white man, the Chemehuevi Indians numbered in the thousands and roamed from the Tehachapi Mountains in California through southern Nevada and a small part of Arizona. Their language and culture are completely different from that of the other tribes along the lower California River. They are Ute-Aztec; part of the great Shoshonean linguistic family which stretches from the Shoshones in the north to the Aztecs of Mexico.

The Chemehuevis were a nomadic people, first by necessity, then later by choice. They were primarily a hunting, seed-gathering culture; although there is no tribal memory of a time when they did not plant wheat beside the river. Their basketwork is considered among the finest in the world, although this art has now almost died out. The tribe hopes to bring back this important part of the culture.

They had a very complex socio-political organization, consisting of many individual bands, each with its own sub-chief or "mayor," all united under the High Chiefs. There were three sections to the tribe, or nation: the Northern People, the Southern People, and the Desert People. The form of government was truly democratic; all the people met to decide important matters, and each had a voice.

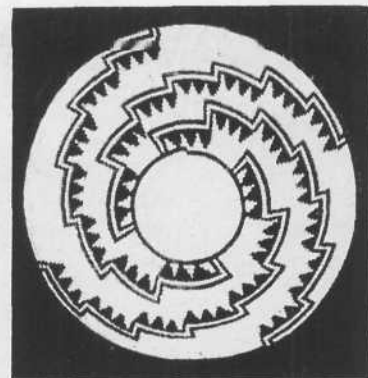
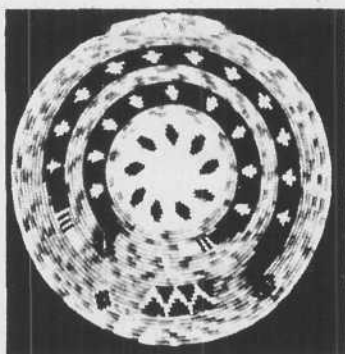
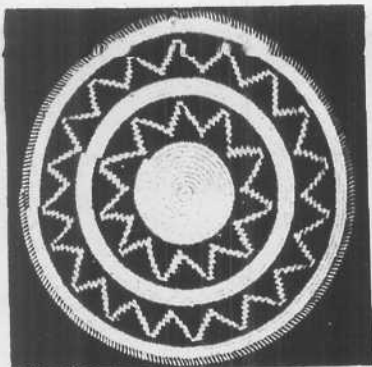
The High Chiefs were primarily moral teachers, concerning themselves with the ethics and morals of the tribe.

The following excerpt from the forthcoming book, *The Chemehuevis*, by Carobeth Laird, gives perhaps the best description of their character: "The Chemehuevi character is made up of polarities which are complementary rather than contradictory. They are loquacious yet capable of silence; gregarious yet so close to the earth that single families or even men alone might live and travel for long periods away from other human beings; proud, yet capable of a gentle self-ridicule. They are conservative to a degree, yet insatiably curious and ready to enquire into and even adopt new ways; to visit all tribes, whether friends or enemies; to speak strange tongues, sing strange songs and marry strange wives."

This, then, was the Chemehuevi when the white man came. Through smallpox, flu, and other diseases the people were quickly decimated. Soon the remnants of the tribe were left only along the Colorado River and in a few other scattered places.

On March 3, 1853, the Chemehuevis lost their territories in California when the lands were declared public domain. In 1865, the United States Government established a Colorado River Reservation, mainly in Arizona, for all Indians along the Colorado River, but the Chemehuevis regarded this as alien territory. In 1906, Bureau of Indian Affairs Special Agent C. E. Kelsy wrote, "... but as

THE



CHEMEHUEVIS

the Chimehuevis (sic) are of Shonshonian stock and at enmity with the Indians lower down the river, who are of Yuman stock, nothing but the military power of the Government could make them go to the reservation or stay there when moved."

On February 2, 1907, the Secretary of the Interior withdrew 36,000 acres comprising the Chemehuevi Valley and set aside the area for the Chemehuevi Indians. This act extinguished the rights of the Chemehuevis to any lands in Nevada and Arizona. But the nature of the Chemehuevis had not changed. Although they considered Chemehuevi Valley as the heartland, it was not, and never had been, able to furnish all they needed to live. For some years the people continued to roam the Mohave Desert, the San Bernardino Mountains and other places hunting game, gathering yucca dates and pine nuts in season, and visiting other tribes.

This attitude made it easier for the Bureau of Indian Affairs when, in 1912, they began persuading families to move to the Colorado River Reservation. Some went because of promises that there they could make a living; others were forced down because they were needed for specific work by the Bureau. But none of them ever relinquished their rights as Chemehuevis, and all still considered Chemehuevi Valley as the homeland. Most of the people believed it was only a temporary move to the alien country.

In 1929, the Metropolitan Water District was formed by the State of Califor-

nia, and plans for Parker Dam were soon formulated. In 1940, the entire river bottom, including an area of some 7,776 acres of the Chemehuevi Reservation, was taken by the United States Government and turned over to the Metropolitan Water District for the formation of Havasu Lake. The allottees on the river lands were paid a total of \$27,426.50, and \$80,846.69 was put in trust for the Chemehuevi Indian Tribe. This amounted to about \$14 an acre—not much, but a lot better than the 27 cents an acre later awarded the tribe for the earlier land taking.

In taking this land, it was ruled that the Indians had no say in the matter. On June 21, 1940, the House Public Lands Committee stated in its report: "... No question of policy with respect to the transfer of lands is involved. The lands will be inundated in any event. The bill merely authorizes the formal transfer and puts the district in the position to pay the Indians for the land." One Chemehuevi, however, was appointed to the board of appraisal which was formed in 1938.

It was at this time that the Bureau of Indian Affairs proved once more that it did not understand the Chemehuevis' feeling towards their homeland, and either by accident or deliberately, caused dissension among the people when it declared that the tribe had no legal entity. A few Chemehuevis had begun to accept the white man's concept of land ownership, and 17 people claimed they constituted the entire tribe and were en-

titled to the landtaking money.

Meanwhile, Chemehuevis living in other parts of the country and on the Colorado River Reservation still considered themselves Chemehuevis, and their sojourn elsewhere as a temporary thing. Families became split and the culture disintegrated even more, and the money from Parker Dam stayed in trust. The Bureau of Indian Affairs discouraged any organization of the tribe as a legal entity and encouraged Chemehuevis to cease to think of themselves as a separate people and become just "Colorado River Indians."

On August 11, 1951, the Chemehuevi Indian Tribe, under the authority of the Indian Claims Commission, brought suit against the United States Government to recover damages for the lands taken in California, Nevada and Arizona in 1853 and 1907. The Commission determined that 3,600,000 acres of the land taken had been used exclusively by the Chemehuevi Tribe, and a new judgment of \$996,834.81 was awarded the tribe. On April 30, 1965, Congress appropriated the money to pay this judgment. After payment of attorney fees, the balance was placed in trust for the tribe.

Through the work of the Special Committee, and later the Tribal Council, a bill was finally passed in Congress to distribute the money "per capita" to all persons having Chemehuevi blood. At the Annual General Meeting in December, 1972, the Tribal Chairman had the happy duty to announce that checks for all Chemehuevis were in the mail. After

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so many years of waiting, this was truly a happy season for Chemehuevis.

Because the United States Government did not consider the Chemehuevi Indian Tribe a legal entity, no monies for leases, permits or landtakings could be distributed to the people or used to develop the reservation. In 1942, and many times after that, various groups had tried to gain legal recognition for the tribe, but working from within an alien reservation without funds, without education, without help from the government and without legal assistance, it proved impossible. Each time their efforts failed—but the Chemehuevis never gave up.

In 1968, a group of non-reservation Chemehuevis tried once more. In June of that year, after unsuccessfully trying to enlist the aid of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, they went ahead on their own and called a meeting of Chemehuevis at Havasu Landing, California. About 150 people attended, a constitution was approved and council elected. One week later, the Bureau of Indian Affairs called a general meeting at Parker, Arizona, and selected six other Chemehuevis which it arbitrarily added to the original nine. The 15-man committee was called the Special Committee for Chemehuevi Affairs by the Bureau. This group, which represented all factions of the Chemehuevi people, set about working together to organize the tribe and draw up a bill for distribution of the judgment money.

Many of the people were suspicious at first because the tribe had been split and scattered for so long and they were afraid it was just another trick to take more land away. (Twice the Bureau of Indian Affairs had drafted a bill for distribution of the judgment money which included a provision that the land and other monies would be given to the Colorado River Tribes Reservation. Each time the people had voted it down.) Through patience and perseverance, the Special Committee eventually persuaded the people that they were working for all Chemehuevis, and slowly the split in the tribe began healing.

Eight months after the organization of the Special Committee, the group heard about California Indian Legal Services, an OEO-funded organization to help Indian Tribes who had no funds. Although the Chemehuevis had money in trust, because they did not exist legally, they were unable to touch the funds. In

March, 1969, California Indian Legal Services was retained by the Special Committee to help. Without legal assistance, the Chemehuevis would never have succeeded in organizing. This legal service helped in formulating a judgment fund distribution bill which, through, the efforts of the Special Committee and CILS, was passed by Congress in September, 1970. Because the people felt that this money, now a little over a million dollars, truly belonged to their ancestors now gone, a per capita distribution to all descendants will be made, whether or not they wish to belong to the Chemehuevi Tribe.

CILS also worked with the Special Committee as advisor in drafting a constitution for the tribe. This constitution was necessary for the tribe to be recognized as a legal entity. On February 14, 1970, a general meeting of all Chemehuevi descendants was called to vote on the proposed constitution. By a vote of 161 for and only 11 against, the people showed unmistakably that they wished to be a recognized tribe. On June 5, 1970, the Secretary of the Interior formally approved the constitution, and on October 10, the first Chemehuevi Tribal Council was elected. At long last, the Chemehuevis legally existed as a tribe!

The Chemehuevi Indian Reservation is divided into two distinct parts. The northern section is mostly flat mesa land, gently sloping from the Chemehuevi Mountains to a point about 15 feet above the water, with no deep washes. The bays are shallow. The southern section is filled with winding canyons, picturesque cliffs and deep bays and coves. The two sections, although so completely different, are both ideal resort areas.

Until December 28, 1973, the 21-mile shoreline was under the management of the Bureau of Land Management and the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife. The regaining of control of this shoreline, which the Chemehuevis felt was illegally taken, was considered vital to the development of recreation on the reservation. The water's edge is between 400 and 450 feet, but the land was taken to the 465-foot contour line, and even beyond in some places. Through many trips to Washington, D.C. by the top tribal officials, and with the help of the tribal attorneys, Mr. Philip Stevens of Ultra Systems, Inc., (who furnished his aid free), and various Senators and re-

representatives of Congress, the shoreline is finally being returned to the Chemehuevi Tribe, to become part of the reservation once more. Until all legal work can be done (including an Environmental Impact Study), the Chemehuevi Tribe has been given a use and occupancy permit, to enable it to continue its economic development.

The tribal roll was closed temporarily during the latter part of 1970, so that the nine-man council could be elected. At that time, 131 tribal members were enrolled. As soon as the council held its first meeting the rolls were reopened for one year. When the rolls were finally closed, in November of 1971, 315 Chemehuevis had enrolled in the tribe. A great number of Chemehuevi people have since applied, and the council is working out ways of adoption of these people into the tribe.

The Chemehuevi people are ambitious and are anxious to develop the land sufficiently so that there will be no needy members. At the same time, the tribe wishes to maintain its ancient culture in so far as it is possible. To accomplish its aims, the tribal council has, with the aid of government grants, hired the University of Southern California to formulate a master plan of the reservation. With the help of OEO funds, a preliminary study was made in 1971-1972. Since then, the funds have been given through the HUD 701 grant, amounting to approximately \$40,000 per year. A planning committee of tribal members meets with the USC people working on the project twice a month. Their recommendations are then presented to the tribal council at the

Continued on Page 38

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Loading the "Mechanical Mule" aboard the raft prior to ferrying it across the shallow waters. The 16-foot Zodiac inflatable boat is moored on the beach.

ERLE'S

ERLE STANLEY GARDNER will long be remembered for his mystery stories; especially the Perry Mason series. Somehow he managed to sandwich, between manuscripts of mysteries, extended visits to an intriguing and fascinating, out-of-the-way place called Baja California.

In December of 1959, Mr. Gardner and a half dozen or so stouthearted friends gathered together a caravan of four-wheel-drive vehicles, boats, motor bikes and trailers and headed south to Baja in hopes of studying and photographing the California gray whale in its natural winter habitat, Scammons Lagoon, and beachcombing a virtually unknown and unvisited beach on a sand island which was said to be, literally, "the dump yard of the Pacific."

Hunting the Desert Whale, the detailed story of this trip, although out-of-print now, was published by Mr. Gardner in 1960. Many libraries have this

book available and it should prove interesting reading to those considering visiting the area.

Now, 15 years later, the bone-jarring, tortuous trail that once was the only "road" has been replaced by a brand new paved highway—all the way down. This inviting new highway, together with a long standing curiosity of "what's really out there on that beach?" was too much to resist, so I set out to explore the "Dump Yard of the Pacific," some 450 miles below the border.

The "island" is really only an island at high tide. Even at low tide, however, it is virtually impossible to walk from the mainland to the island because of the soggy salt marshes and maze-like lagoons that meander throughout the area. The only practical way to approach this sandy stretch of beach is by water. We had brought along an inflatable boat which proved to be made to order for the trip. The 16-foot, French-made Zodiac behaved beautifully. Fully inflated, with

its unique feature of balloon-tired wheels secured to a wooden transom, it was easily towed, as a trailer, from Black Warrior Lagoon across the 30 miles of beach to Scammons Lagoon.

Before leaving home, I had constructed a simple raft that could be taken apart and put together without too much trouble. At the old pier, nine miles out from the town of Guerro Negro (Black Warrior), we were able to piece together this contraption and ferry across a war surplus "Mechanical Mule," a four-wheel-drive machine, to the island. The distance from the pier to the island is approximately one mile. The Mule, together with the Zodiac, proved to be a fearsome twosome for the beach.

What is really out there on that beach? Millions of old light bulbs, TV tubes, bottles of all descriptions, lumber, logs, trees from all over the world, several old shipwrecks—mostly buried in the sand, cartridge cases from warships, wooden storage containers of every shape and

Once on Erle's Beach, the "Mule," with canopy rigged, towed the Zodiac and made exploring the island easy.



BEACH

by C. WESLEY HAMSHAW

size, acres of whale skeletons, vertebrae bleaching in the sun, three or four baby whales, possibly premature births that couldn't make it, freshly washed up on the beach.

There is little vegetation on the island. No romantic palm trees or native coconuts. Just rolling sand dunes, with an occasional area where the dunes are more stable and a fat, succulent plant with a purple blossom flourishes.

In the 15 years since Erle Stanley Gardner visited this area, I would guess that just a handful of people have ventured there. The large, round glass fishing net balls and old bottles turned purple in the sun, are still to be found; however it takes some looking to find them. The easy ones apparently have been picked up.

At first glance, it would appear that most of the "goodies" were washed just back of the surf area. After spending several days there, however, it was evident that the most interesting things

were washed way back, possibly a half mile or more from the surf area, during storms. These areas are more difficult and time-consuming to explore, but render very interesting rewards.

Very few tracks were evident of previous visits to the island. This would not seem surprising since the wind moves the sand considerably. It is interesting to note that some tracks, made possibly years ago, were still evident in some areas; however, sand dunes and vegetation had moved in and covered over much of their traces, in the interim.

The only wildlife noticed were coyotes and birds. Since there is no fresh water on the island, one would question how the coyotes get drinking water. Mr. Gardner points out in one of his books that he had seen evidence of coyotes and wild pigs (on the mainland) drinking salt water. This may be true here.

Scammons Lagoon is the principal winter courting area and nursery for the big California gray whales. The activities

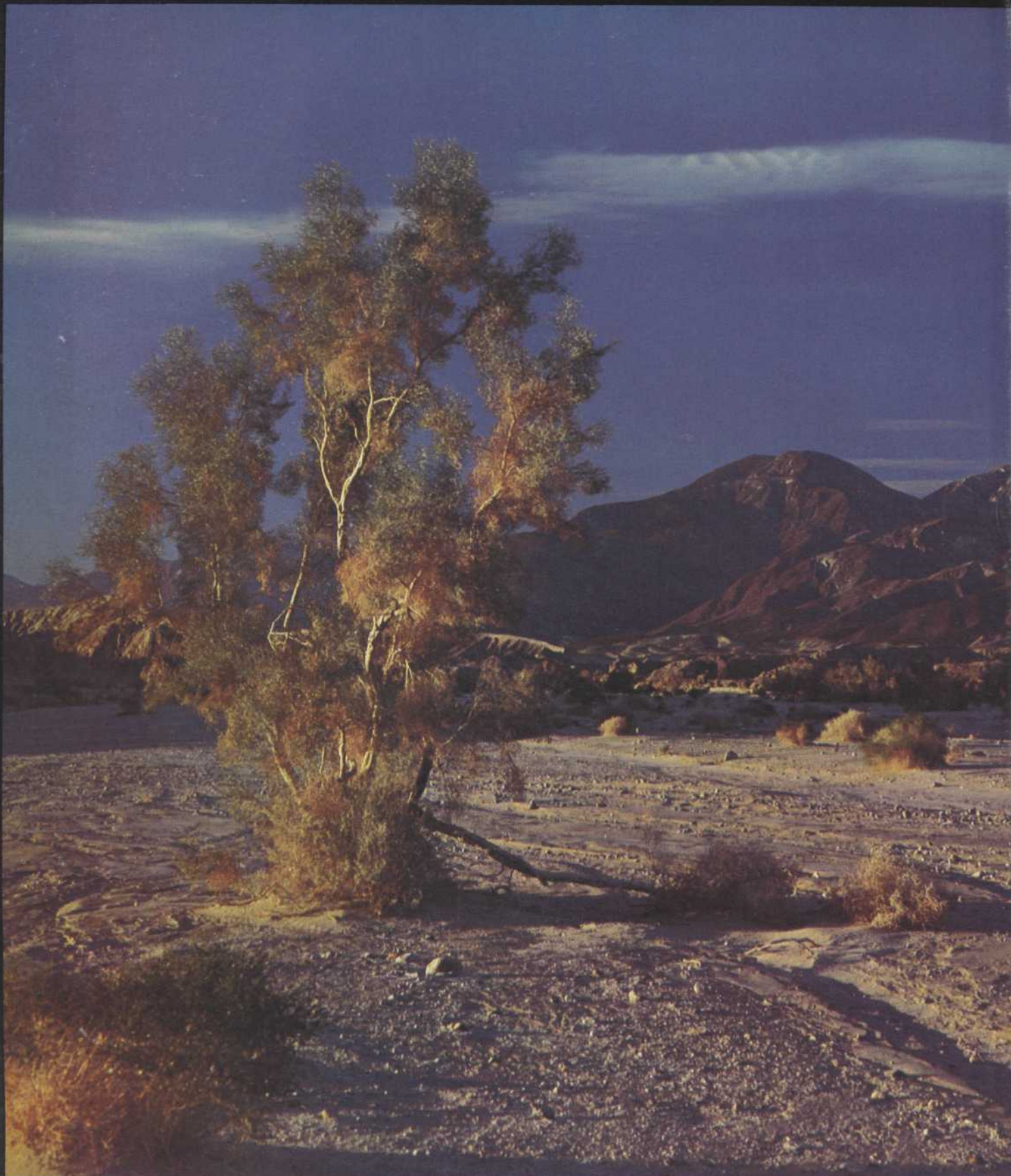
of these monsters are well outlined in Gardner's book, and is too vast a subject to detail here except to point out the geographic location of the island in relation to the whaling areas. January and February is the prime whale-watching time there, and where could there be a better vantage point than from the mouth of this large body of water.

Interesting to note, at no time did we feel the least bit apprehensive when out in the boat with the whales. We were able to photograph them from 10 to 15 feet away with no difficulty. Even a small calf (15 or so feet long) and her mamma were quite undisturbed by our presence.

Whale watching is quite a thrill, and combined with beachcombing one of the most interesting (debris-wise) beaches anywhere, this is a winter vacation spot that will be remembered for years to come.

Indeed, it is a perfect place for one who doesn't mind a little sand in his soup to get away from it all. □

The Greatest Li



ear of Them All



by DIANA LINDSAY

OUT ON California's Anza-Borrego Desert, five miles from the center of Borrego Springs, lies a mound of rocks, a monument to Pegleg Smith and to those who would perpetuate the fabulous story of gold. A faded register erected by Desert Steve Ragsdale of Desert Center in 1949 marks the spot.

It is also the site of the once popular Pegleg Mine Trek and Liar's Contest. On April 4, 1975, Peglophiles are in for a real treat. The first Mine Trek and Liar's Contest to be held in some 20 years is scheduled, appropriately enough, on the birthday of the greatest promoter of the Pegleg legend that ever lived, Harry Oliver. Although some may wonder why there is so much ado about Pegleg and his mine, in fact, it is no surprise at all.

Next to that of the Lost Dutchman Mine of Arizona, the Lost Pegleg is the most famous lost mine of the Southwest. One authority of western lost mines has even placed it first, stating that "more men have sought the Lost Pegleg than ever searched for any other so-called lost mine." To account for this fact, Harry Oliver once explained that prospectors "seem to figure it's easier to find a mine someone else has lost, than to find one no one ever found, so most of them are huntin' for the mysterious lost ones, that's been talked about so much." Great controversy exists not only over the existence and location of this mythical mine, but also about the activities of the colorful Pegleg.

Pegleg was, indeed, an authentic character—a mountain man, Indian fighter, horse thief, trader, adventurer, and great teller of tales. Born in Kentucky in 1801, Thomas Long Smith began his mountain man career in 1820 when he first went on a trapping and trading expedition into Kansas and Nebraska territory with Antoine Roubidoux. Over the years, he trapped and traded through the West with many other well known mountain men such as Jedediah Smith, Ewing Young, Thomas Fitzpatrick, Ceran St. Vrain, Sylvester Pratte and Milton Sublette. As an Indian fighter, he was known to have taken the scalps of his victims, but was not so lucky during one Indian attack. Smith's left leg was shattered by an arrow during a trapping expedition in the fall of 1827. With Milton Sublette's help, Smith amputated his own foot above the ankle. While he recovered, his trapper friends fashioned a wooden leg for him and dubbed him "Pegleg."

Continued

The lure of the desert and hidden riches permeates from this photo on the Anza-Borrego Desert by George Service of Palm Desert.

In the summer of 1828, Smith rendezvoused at Bear Lake Valley, and joined a group that trapped the Virgin River area. When a large supply of pelts were collected by early 1829, the group chose Smith and trapper Maurice LeDuc to cross the desert en route to Los Angeles where they would sell their pelts. In later years, Pegleg claimed that he picked up a few black pebbles that were profusely scattered about on the top of one of three buttes in the Anza-Borrego area. He also claimed that he discovered in Los Angeles that the black pebbles were almost pure gold nuggets. But, evidently, he was not interested in gold at that time. While in Los Angeles, he sold the pelts, went on a drunk, got into a fight, and was run out of town by local officials. On his way out of California, he rounded up 300 or 400 horses from the California ranchos and drove these to Taos to sell.

As the fur trade declined in the 1830s, Smith settled down with friendly Ute In-

dians and turned to trading—especially horses which he procured from California ranchos. This he profitably did for the next several years. In the early 1840s, Smith established a trading post along the Oregon Trail in Bear River, Idaho. Smith was well known along the trail, trading fresh horses and food for a reasonable price. He left Bear River only after the discovery of gold lured him to California.

Arriving in California in 1850, he went to Los Angeles where he interested a party in searching for his lost gold. The treasure seekers wandered about the desert unsuccessfully for a few days. Reportedly, Pegleg deserted the group to later reappear in Los Angeles. Again in 1853, with similar success, he led another expedition to find his mythical three buttes. A third expedition, led the next year, attempted to find a gold ledge that trapper Dutch George Yount found in 1826-27 when they worked the Virgin

River area. The search for Dutch George's lost ledge also proved to be a failure.

Pegleg spent his last colorful days in the San Francisco area, drinking and spinning yarns about his fabulous lost mine. According to Major Horace Bell, a contemporary of Smith's, Pegleg was "the most superlative liar that ever honored California with his presence." Bell believed his mine was a lie conceived to procure free whiskey. Despite the tales told, Smith was even awarded a state pension based on the help he gave California-bound emigrants at his Bear River outpost. After he died at the age of 65, on October 15, 1866, the legend of his lost gold mine continued to grow. In fact, Pegleg's death may be considered the beginning of the Lost Pegleg Mine story.

Because there are so many contradictory facts about and experiences attributed to Pegleg and his lost mine, other Peglegs were created in the minds of treasure seekers to accommodate these. The general site of the three fabled buttes moved about the Anza-Borrego Desert, with a few Peglophiles preferring the Chocolate Mountains, on the eastern edge of the Colorado Desert. Legends of lost Indian gold mines have become entwined with Pegleg's mine. Adding fuel to the gold legend is the claim of various persons having found gold. The majority of prospectors claim to have either seen the gold or the three fabled buttes or have come very close to finding it. Each of these has his own favorite version of the Pegleg tale.

According to one of the more famous Pegleg prospectors, Henry E. W. Wilson, Thomas Smith had a mine which he worked in the Chocolate Mountains. The Pegleg of the gold-covered butte, though, was not Thomas but John O. Smith, a guide and horse trader. In 1852, this second Pegleg crossed the desert from Yuma to Warner's Ranch, attempting a short cut through the Borrego Badlands. There he found the fabled three buttes with black-coated gold nuggets on top of one of the buttes. Thinking these were copper, he picked a few specimens up and took them to Los Angeles where he discovered they were gold. Later, he tried to relocate the site but was never successful.

A few years later, a discharged soldier from Fort Yuma followed John O. Smith's route, found the three buttes



"Desert Steve" Ragsdale, a judge of the Liars' contest 1948-49, with the register he set up on the date shown. Photo by Randall Henderson.

and the gold nuggets. He showed the specimens he had picked to friends and later went out with them to get more. Their bodies were found sometime afterwards in the foothills of the San Ysidro Mountains, according to Wilson.

Philip Bailey's description of the activities of the later Peglegs, in his *Golden Mirages*, differ slightly with Wilson's. Both of Bailey's Peglegs found their gold somewhere in the Chocolate Mountains. One of these Peglegs was a desert guide and later a teamster hauling freight between the Colorado River and San Bernardino. He claimed to have found gold in the late 1860s. The other Pegleg received his military discharge from the Army at Fort Yuma and then later married a Yuman Indian. After a year of marriage, he convinced his wife to disclose the location of a gold mine known to the Indians. He went to the site in the Chocolate Mountains, picked up some gold, and was later found by a teamster wandering over the desert after he ran out of water. When he returned to Yuma he met his wife's brother and engaged in a fight with him, killing him by accident. He fled and later met a German who killed him for his gold.

Peglophiles commonly cite stories, with more or less similar details, to support the existence of the fabled gold. In one story, a miner was crossing the desert between Yuma and Warner's Ranch in 1869 when he climbed a hill to get his bearings. The hill was covered with particles of free gold. The miner emptied his saddlebags and filled them with approximately \$7,000 worth of gold, and then he resumed his journey to Los Angeles. There he became ill and was cared for by a Dr. DeCourcy, whom he took into his confidence. When he became better they planned an expedition to return to the gold site, but in the excitement of returning, the miner had a relapse and died. For years afterwards, the doctor searched but never found anything.

A few years later, in another story, two Frenchmen discovered gold in the desert. One of them went to the mining town of Banner and proceeded to brag about his mine and showed samples of the nuggets. He was later shot, but before he died, he told a Negro named Jim Green, who worked in the Banner saloon, the location of the mine. The other Frenchman disappeared, but from then on Green reportedly always had a gold



Harry Oliver, at Old Fort Oliver, who proclaimed himself Pegleg Smith's press agent, and was one of the two founders of the Pegleg Liars' Contest and Trek. Harry is touching up one of the wooden peglegs he produced to further the Pegleg legend. Harry scattered a number of these through the Borrego Badlands through the years to encourage hunters for the Pegleg Gold.

supply. He loaned money to friends and even bought property in Julian. While in the desert he commonly camped at Borrego Springs which was once known as "Nigger Springs." One prospector, Charles E. "Mac" McCloud of Julian, felt that Green's mine was located in the Borrego Badlands and was possibly the same as Pegleg's.

There are also stories of Indians having knowledge of gold in the Anza-Borrego area. The Indian gold legends have appeared both in connection with Pegleg's gold and separately. Some Peglophiles believe they should not be confused, while others believe they are one and the same.

In one story, an Indian woman, staggering from thirst, came into a railroad construction camp at Salton in 1876 or 1879. She told the crew how she had crossed the desert and run out of water. She climbed to the top of one of "tres picachos" from where she sighted the smoke of the construction crew's camp. She also picked up black-coated gold nuggets while on this hill, which she later showed to the crew and gave one specimen to the chief engineer. After resting, she went on her way and was never seen again.

In another Indian story, a Yaqui Indian from Sonora married a Diegueno Indian



FOR THE FUTURE

by AL PEARCE

OME PEOPLE will complain—they always do—but the idea is to preserve at least a portion of the desert so visitors in the year 2000 will not have to wonder what it must have been like.

There's more to the idea. It amounts to something more than just putting a few acres of land aside for future generations; it's also a concept of providing recreation for the most people possible.

Because of conflicting interests, these concepts and ideas are not generally easily applied. But the Riverside County Parks Department of California has somehow managed to bring the thing all together; and its efforts will begin to pay off during 1975.

There has been some resistance to the county's parks program; there is always resistance to change. And this writer also feels the urge to resist; but when the program of development is eyed fairly and honestly, it must be admitted that controlled activity on the desert is inevitable.

I can remember when the desert was wide open. I can remember spending a weekend in the Mecca Hills and not seeing another soul. I can remember when Imperial County opened the park near Glamis in the sand dunes. I also spent a weekend there by myself.

But things have changed. I would like it to still be like it was. I would like to come to the desert, go any place I like, do anything I wish. But this is no longer possible.

What is possible then?

Riverside County Parks director, Pete Dangermond, has put together a whole stack of statistics on what people do when they come to the desert.

The parks commissioners in this county have reviewed those statistics and developed a parks program on the desert aimed at providing—as near as possible—a little bit of something for everybody—both today and in the year 1990.

The county's parks program takes in a little bit of everything. There will be interpretive centers, recreational areas, and, yes, even an off-road vehicle park. The county also is trying to put together a canoe route along the Colorado River; but littering boaters have hindered progress on this project.

To understand why this particular list of activities and projects are underway, it might be a good idea to spend a moment looking at the statistics Dangermond put together.

Like I said earlier, ten years ago, or longer, my wife, Iola, and I generally found ourselves all alone when we came

to different sections of the Southern California Desert. At that time, it was unlikely that more than a few families could be found anywhere on the desert during an entire week.

Now—usage is counted in the millions of visitor-days. For example, In 1970, these participation days numbered 220,393,000. This figure will climb to 286,537,000 by 1980 and up to 378,919,000 by the year 1990.

Continued

Photo showing Pushawalla Canyon as it appeared in 1946.



It doesn't take a genius to figure out what will happen, or what the desert will look like, in 1990, if some control is not exercised before then.

But, really, it isn't all that bad.

Take Lake Cahuilla, for example. A few years ago, the area occupied by Lake Cahuilla was probably totally unknown to desert visitors. It's now a thriving recreation area—thanks to the Riverside County Parks Department.

And what about Pushawalla Canyon. I've visited this canyon on numerous occasions and have never seen anyone there. Although several local residents talk about the area.

Let's take a close look at this canyon. It's unique.

The San Andreas Fault, probably the most publicized fault in the nation, has its beginning near the Gulf of California and sneaks slowly northward to San Francisco. Geologists insist that, in a few thousand years, this fault will have succeeded in splitting California in half. The western half will become an island floating in the Pacific.

In the meantime, the fault, although visible most of its length, becomes exceptionally unique in several areas. One such area is through Pushawalla Canyon.

A fault, simply defined, is a spitting of the earth. Generally, one side or the other of the split moves. The western half of the San Andreas fault is moving northwards at the rate of a fraction of an inch each year, taking Los Angeles with it.

It is this movement that creates the uniqueness in the Pushawalla Canyon. Fault striae (scratches and grooves caused by movement) are visible in several areas of the canyon. The fault also does something else in this area. Somehow it has trapped water, which in itself is not unusual along faults. But the water leaks to the surface through the different canyons in the Pushawalla Canyon area forming four separate oases.

In the Pushawalla Canyon itself, the water comes to the surface and forms a small stream. The length of the stream varies with the time of year. Palm trees (Washingtonias) are prevalent along the route of the stream. There also can be found tamarisk trees and other types of vegetation. There are downed cottonwood trees, indicating that at one time there must have been more water than there is now.

As an interesting sidelight, several years ago geologists became extremely interested in the area because of the small amounts of oil deposits found in different sections of the stream. Close examination, however, disclosed another uniqueness. The oil is formed—on the surface—by decaying organic matter. One of the few places in the world where this phenomenon can be visibly observed.

The Riverside County Parks Department plans to turn this area into an interpretive center. On a ridge, overlooking this canyon, the parks department will build an educational center and an overlook. There will also be trails down into and through the canyon. The first phase of development is scheduled for completion this year. The park will eventually take in more than 5,000 acres along the San Andreas Fault line.

This park will be for interpretation only. By this, it is meant that there will be no camping or recreational activities other than hiking.

And why not? Those statistics we were talking about indicate that a large percentage of visitor days on the desert

are used for "Sight Seeing."

Another large percentage of visitor days, believe it or not, goes to fishing. And Riverside County is developing parks along the Colorado River and will soon have facilities at Lake Cahuilla for large camping groups.

Let's talk about the Colorado River for a moment. That's part of the desert.

Several months ago, Iola and I were camped on the banks of the river below Walter's Camp. We were with Joyce and Charlie White. Before setting up our own camp, we had to spend a little time cleaning up someone else's camp. It had been a mess.

And that's part of the problem on the lower Colorado River.

During that weekend we were camped there, John Sanborn, a member of the Riverside County Parks Commission, came by with a group in canoes. I later had lunch in Palm Desert with John and learned that the group was trying to establish some type of a canoe route down the river from Blythe. John said the canoe trail would be easy to create, but camping facilities are becoming more difficult to maintain. Officials are slowly closing more and more of this part of the river to camping because it is impossible to clean up afterwards.

This means simply that in a few years the primitive camping along the river that so many of us now enjoy will be replaced with controlled campgrounds.

And that's what this article is all about. This is one of the reasons the desert is being closed.

The Riverside County Parks Commission recently approved an off-road vehicle park for about four square miles behind Edom Hill, north of Indio. At the time of this writing, off-road vehicles are using all of this area—and tearing hell out of it. They leave debris behind and neighboring residents in Thousand Palms are complaining.

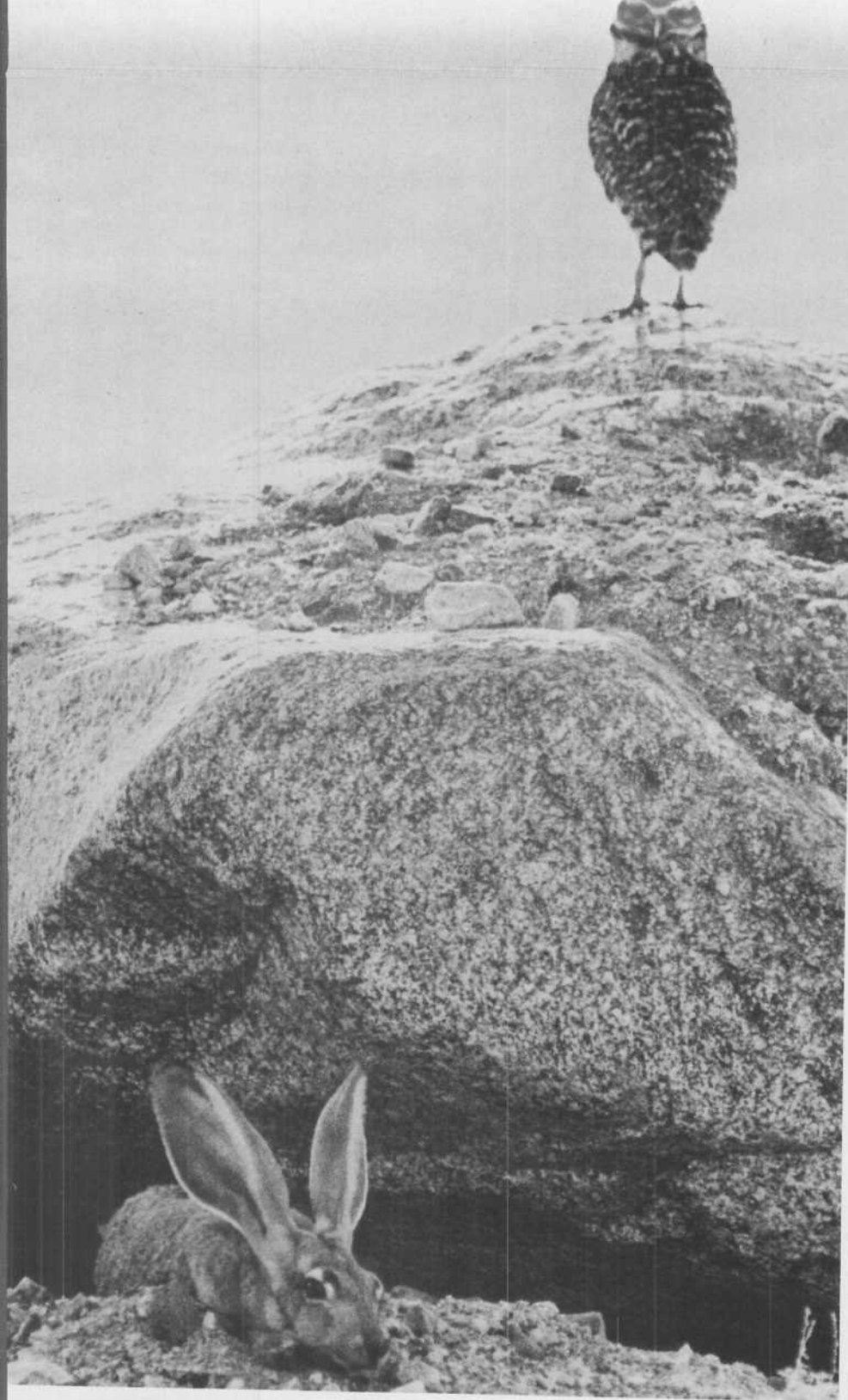
When the park is completed, probably within a year, the outside areas will be closed to off-road vehicles and this type of use will be confined in this area to the park only.

This is a perfect example of one of the things we are talking about. If you'll remember, the same thing happened several years ago in our national forests. I can remember when these areas also were wide open and visitors could do just about anything they liked.

It's this same destructiveness that has led the parks commission to purchase the old Indian Fish Traps south of Indio and mark them for park development. John asked me not to give the exact location of the Traps because it has practically been destroyed by careless visitors. But the Fish Traps were left from the days when the Salton Sea, then known as Lake Cahuilla, covered most of what now is known as the Salton Sink by geologists. The Indians trapped fish here and the traps were made by them hundreds of years ago.

Personally, I must commend the Parks Commission and the Parks director Pete Dangermond for making the most out of a bad situation. In the next few years, these parks, now in the planning stages, will become a part of the Riverside County desert. The commission is trying to give—and save—a little bit of what we all enjoy.

It's control—it can be called nothing else; but without this control, what will the desert be like in 1990? □



Desert Life

by Hans Baerwald

A burrowing owl keeps a close watch on a rabbit as it goes about the chore of finding something to eat.

Desert/March 1975

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GREATEST LIAR

Continued from Page 27


from Grapvine Canyon in the 1880s and settled down at Yaqui Well, which was later named for him. He later moved to Warner's Ranch and worked in the vicinity. He made periodic trips into the desert whenever he needed money and returned with black nuggets. No one was ever able to track him. After he was killed in a brawl, \$4,000 worth of gold was found in his bunk.

The story of Thomas W. Cover may cause some to believe that the Yaqui Indian's gold and Pegleg's gold are the same and that it is located in the Borrego Badlands.

Cover, a Riverside County sheriff, may have met the Yaqui Indian in the desert either while he was hunting horse thieves, as Henry Wilson believed, or he may have talked to Dr. DeCourcy about Pegleg's gold and have become excited about the search. It is not clear if Cover went on several searches or just one. According to one source, Cover went on several expeditions and on his last, in 1884, he was accompanied by his friend, Wilson Russell, who later reported that Cover had both a gold nugget and a map to Pegleg's mine before he disappeared into the desert. Other sources do not indicate if Cover had a map, but they do agree that he had "positive knowledge" about gold being located at the foot of the Santa Rosa Mountains in Borrego Badlands. Cover was last seen in Borrego Valley near the mouth of Coyote Creek. Russell searched for Cover for two days but he was never seen again.

One thing that prospectors seem to have in common is blind faith that they will discover the lost Pegleg mine. Most have claimed to have either seen gold nuggets or the three buttes at one time, but have not been able to relocate the same spot again. Always they are on the verge of discovery. Cover was positive he could find Pegleg's gold, but he did not succeed. Charles McCloud, Henry Wilson and John Mitchell likewise fit this description.

Charlie McCloud first became interested in Pegleg's gold when he heard of Cover's search for the mine. Through the years that followed, he faithfully searched for the gold, never doubting its existence. He was positive that "Nigger Jim" Green was getting gold from Peg-



First contest and trek 1947-48. A. A. [Doc] Beatty, Borrego old-timer, points in direction where he thinks the Lost Pegleg may be located.

Roy Hicks, "Pegleg Smith of 1949," who won the 1948-49 Liars' Contest. Photos by Randall Henderson.



leg's mine, and he was also positive that he had discovered the trail used by Green to the Badlands. Unfortunately, though, he had a heart attack and died in 1939 before he could locate the mine.

Henry Wilson, who spent over 50 years looking for Pegleg's gold and who was convinced that it is somewhere in the Borrego Badlands, felt he may have seen the three buttes in the early 1900s. He was prospecting with Borrego homesteader John Collins between Seventeen Palms and Fish Spring when he saw three hills. The middle of one was covered with black rock. He was lagging behind so he just made a mental note of it and hurried to catch up to Collins. Years later, he tried to relocate the spot and was not successful.

John Mitchell, author of many tales of lost gold mines, also claimed to have found and lost Pegleg's gold in the mid-1920s. He collected three black nuggets at the east end of the Chuckawalla and Chocolate Mountains. He happened to have climbed a hill that was covered by black rocks in hopes of locating a meteor crater he was told about. Not until years later did he break off the black crust and discover gold.

Twenty years after Mitchell's find, a sergeant, who was assigned to an Army tank unit that practiced maneuvers in the Mojave and Colorado deserts, claimed to have found \$3,000 worth of Pegleg's black gold. While he was prospecting on his day off in the Borrego Badlands, he supposedly came upon a low cave or crevice toward the top of a low hill. There he found 20 pounds of black gold in saddlebags beside a skeleton. He took the gold and never reported the incident. Later, in April, 1945, he told another soldier about it while they were stationed in Italy. He felt that there may be more gold in the area, but he was afraid of returning to the site because he might get in trouble for not reporting the incident and might have to turn the gold over to authorities.

The biggest claim of finding Pegleg's gold and the one that has caused the greatest excitement in recent years was made in *Desert Magazine* in March, 1965, by a man who called himself "the man who found Pegleg's black gold." He wrote to the editor, enclosing a sample of his gold nuggets, stating that he had discovered Pegleg's gold 10 years ago by accident and had since marketed



Sign at the Pegleg Monument in Borrego, well autographed by visitors to the first contest and trek. Photo by Randall Henderson.

\$314,650 of nuggets by removing the black covering and selling them in Alaska and Canada. He also claimed to have had \$25,000 of nuggets still in his possession. His biggest find was one nugget that weighed 14.36 ounces which was found two-and-one-half feet below the surface with a metal detector. All of the nuggets he picked up assayed 70 percent gold, 20 percent silver and 10 percent copper. He stated that the black coating on the nuggets was due to copper oxide.

It was suggested that the gold was not native to the area but originally lost by Spaniards who were caravaning it between California's gold fields and Sonora, Mexico. Although no one else has claimed to have found gold as yet, many have found the desert and have gained enjoyment from the Pegleg legend since the 1965 letter.

Many people have helped to keep the Pegleg legend alive. Besides the gold seekers who continue to search for legendary riches, there are others who have just desired to perpetuate the myth. Harry Oliver was one of these. An early homesteader of Borrego Valley and a former Hollywood art director, Oliver en-

joyed talking and writing about desert mythology and pulling pranks designed to perpetuate the Pegleg myth.

In 1916, Oliver helped to start the Pegleg Smith Club composed of local residents from Borrego Valley who enjoyed telling tall tales. Once in the 1920s, Oliver manufactured 200 wooden peglegs, had them weathered to look old, and salted them in various caves, coyote holes, and old prospector's diggings in the Anza-Borrego area. For many years afterwards, prospectors came in with a pegleg believing it was Smith's and that they were on to the location of the lost mine. On another occasion, in the 1940s, Oliver delivered an 18 "karrot" gold nugget from "Lost Pegleg Mine No. 999" to *Desert Magazine's* office. Randall Henderson, editor and publisher of the magazine, described the gold nugget as a plaster of paris cast of 18 carrots bunched together, laquered and painted gold.

Oliver was also instrumental in beginning the first Lost Pegleg Mine Trek with Ray Hetherington, of Knott's Berry Farm in Buena Park, California, on January 1, 1948. Oliver went out to his old homestead in advance of the date,

drew a circle on the ground and left signs which read: "Let him who seeks Pegleg Smith's gold add ten rocks to this monument," and "The bigger the rocks, the better luck you'll have." Thus, the Pegleg Monument, a monument to the greatest liar of them all, was created. Some 200 persons attended that first year's trek.

The following year over 600 persons attended the trek and deposited the required ten rocks on the Pegleg Monument. Colorful desert rats such as Pisgah

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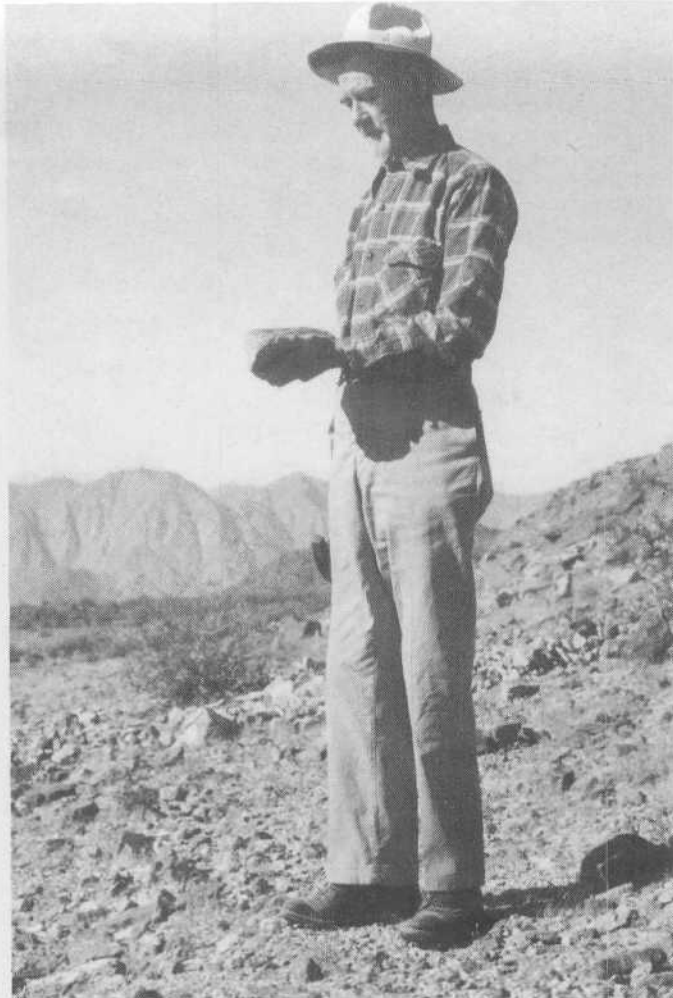
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*H. E. W. Wilson,
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the Lost Pegleg
in the Borrego
country, and a judge
at one
of the early
Liars' contests.
Photos by
Randall
Henderson.*



Bill, Desert Steve Ragsdale, Powder River Sackett, and Hard Rock Hume attended, along with local residents and tourists. Oliver, as master of ceremonies, initiated a Liar's Contest at the campfire the night before the trek. Winners were awarded prizes courtesy of Knott's Berry Farm through Ray Hetherington. Roy Hicks, of Costa Mesa, won the honors as the biggest liar in his role as a reincarnated Pegleg Smith. With a make-shift pegleg and tall yarns to spin, he easily won over the other 20 or more contestants.

Famed desert artist John Hilton not only provided entertainment by playing his guitar, but he also caused excitement and protests when he tossed 11 of his 1948 oil paintings into the fire as part of his annual custom of burning his "mistakes" of the previous year. Desert Steve Ragsdale of Desert Center, one of the judges of the Liar's Contest, told those attending the campfire that he would install a permanent guest register for visitors at the Pegleg Monument. This he followed through in February, placing a metal box on a pedestal with a 1000-page register in the box near the rock pile.

Though an extremely popular event, the annual trek and Liar's Contest ran into trouble in 1952 when residents of Borrego Valley began feuding over the date of the yearly event. Some of the residents wanted to change the annual New Year's date by several months in order to avoid wind and sand storms which occasionally occurred during the yearly event. In 1952, two treks and contests were held—one in October and one on New Years. Over the next few years, enthusiasm for the yearly event cooled as bickering continued.



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Unidentified visitors place stones on the Pegleg monument at the first contest.

Some 20 years have passed since the last Pegleg Mine Trek and Liar's Contest was held—just enough time to rekindle interest in this fun event. Interest in the Pegleg legend itself has never ceased. The size of the monument, piled high by treasure seekers, is testimony to this fact.

On Friday evening, April 4, Peglophiles will have their chance to spin a yarn or two in the finest tradition of Harry Oliver and vie for prizes. The contest will be held at the Pegleg Monument at the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. This area is also a primitive camp in the park, so those who wish may camp in the area.

On Saturday, April 5, those interested in searching for the gold will meet in the morning at the monument, add the required rocks for good luck, and will be off for an adventure in the Borrego Badlands. The park staff will conduct guided tours into the Badlands for those interested and will also have a campfire program on Saturday evening. So, come join the fun and find the real gold, the joy of desert adventure and experiencing one of the greatest legends of the Southwest.



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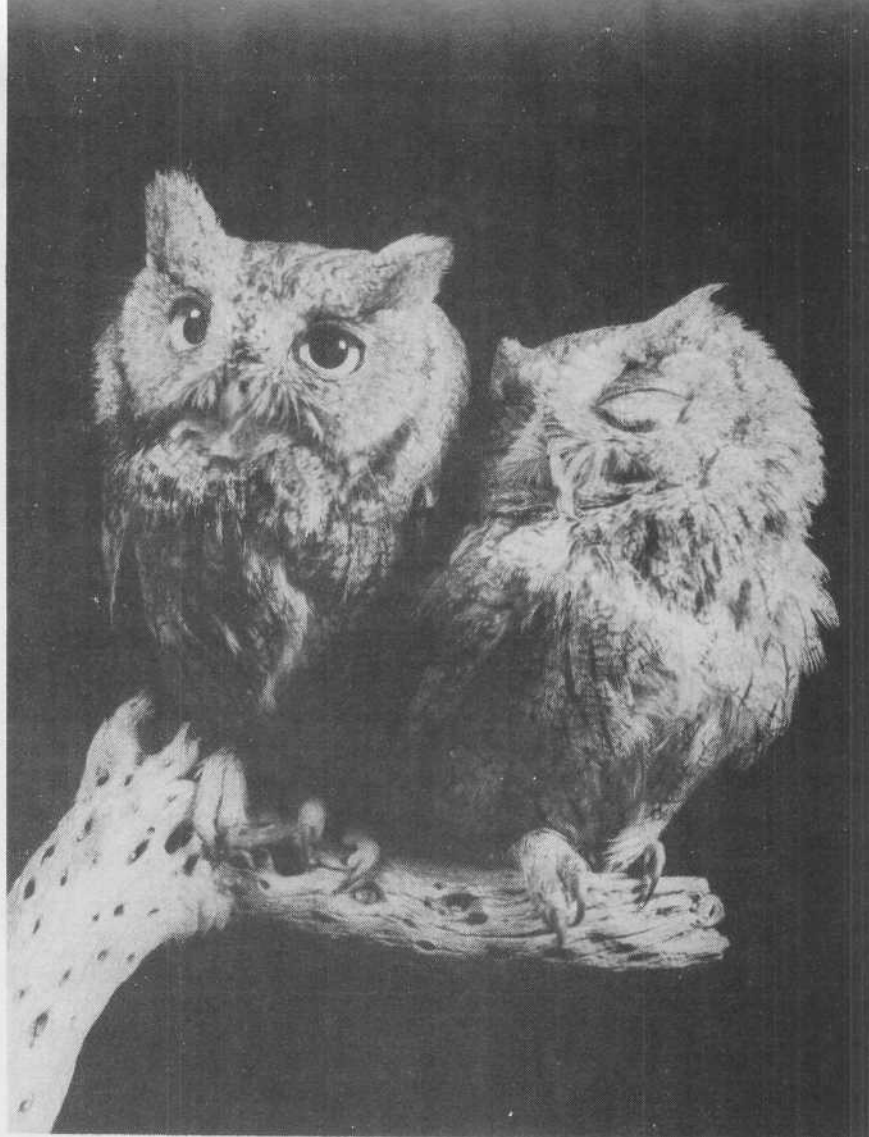
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USE COUPON ON PAGE 43

Recipes for M'Lady

by HELEN PETERSON

UNCOOKED DATE COOKIES

- 1/2 cup honey
- 1/2 cup butter (or oleo)
- 1 cup ground dates
- 1/2 cup toasted coconut
- 1/2 cup graham cracker crumbs
- 1 cup wheat germ
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 cup ground walnuts
- Dash of salt

Combine all ingredients. Form into 1 1/2 inch rolls, wrap into waxed paper and chill overnight. (Or freeze until ready to use.) Slice thin and dip into ground nuts.

PERSIMMON DATE COOKIES

- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup shortening
- 1 egg (beaten)
- 1 cup chopped dates
- 1 cup persimmon pulp
- 1/2 cup chopped nuts
- 2 cups all purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon cloves
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon soda

Dissolve soda in persimmon pulp, add dates—set aside. Cream shortening and sugar, add egg. Add sifted dry ingredients alternately with persimmon pulp and add nuts. Drop from spoon onto greased cookie sheet. Bake 10 minutes at 350 degrees. Makes approximately six dozen cookies.

OATMEAL DATE BARS

- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 cup soft butter (or oleo)
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup chopped dates
- 1/4 cup hot water
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 cup all purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup quick oatmeal
- 1/2 cup chopped nuts

Pour hot water over dates—set aside. Combine sugar, butter and eggs in mixer, add vanilla. Add soaked dates, sifted dry ingredients and nuts. Add oatmeal last. Pour batter into waxed paper-lined eight-inch square pan. Bake 25 minutes in 350 oven. Cool and cut into squares.

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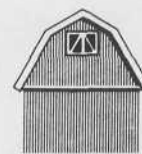
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THE CHEMEHUEVIS

Continued from Page 21

monthly council meeting. The council then makes the decisions as to accepting or rejecting the recommendations.

The reservation is being planned in such a way as to complement Lake Havasu City, rather than imitate it. The Chemehuevis have always had a reverence for the land, and all developments will be planned so that they least harm the earth. By developing joint enterprises, and enterprises with the tribe as sole owner, the people can retain control of future development. The Chemehue-

vis also feel that the value of the land, and its desirability as a recreational area will be higher if as much of the natural beauty is retained as possible.

Top priority has been given to getting tribal income started. A public campground has been built under a franchise with Indian Campgrounds Incorporated. The campground is just south of the Havasu Landing area, with a road in from the county road, which turns off before one reaches the Havasu Landing area. At the present time about 50 sites have been completed, with running water, picnic tables and barbecue grills at each site.

The campground has its own beach just below the camping area. Plans call for the establishment of a boat landing for small boats at the site in the near future. Meanwhile, there is a public boat launching available at Havasu Landing.

The tribe believes that the establishment of this campground is the first step toward economic independence. Many campers have been trespassing on the reservation for the simple reason that they have no specific place to camp. The people felt that, in view of this, a campground would be more than welcomed. In addition, a campground such as this could be moved in the future, should the master plan eventually call for a more sophisticated development, such as a resort hotel, to be built on the spot; whereas more permanent structures would be harder to change.

Provision for the old people has also been taken into consideration. In the Chemehuevi tradition, old people are greatly respected and these people will need housing and income, as most of them are completely destitute at present. Since they are the repository of the ancient heritage, who remember the song roots, how food was gathered and prepared, how the artifacts were made,

where to gather the plants that were (and still are) used as medicine, and how the famous beautiful baskets were woven, they are a priceless asset.

Over half of the members of the tribe are under 21 years of age. These children are the hope of the Chemehuevi people, and good education must be provided for them if the tribe is to continue. About a half-dozen are now attending colleges and universities, and the tribal council hopes, through scholarships, grants and loans, to be able to send many more within the next few years.

In the past, motivation for learning has been poor, as the people could see no point in an education if they could not better themselves. This attitude is changing fast, as the people are regaining pride in their ancestry, and hope that opportunities will be available for prosperity and jobs on their own land. The tribe hopes to be able to maintain a balance between using the white man's knowledge and technology to provide better material things and using the ancient philosophy and ceremonies of the culture to maintain the serene mental outlook and closeness to nature which is traditional with the Chemehuevi people.

The Chemehuevi language has changed greatly even in the last 50 years, but it has not been forgotten. However, most of the very young people no longer speak it, although most of them understand it. Through the future establishment of a school on the reservation, using the older people as teachers, the tribe hopes to be able to bring back the Chemehuevi tongue as a visible language.

At present the nearest schools are at Needles, California, over 30 miles away. A school bus transports the children. As more children move to the reservation, a school on the premises will be necessary. Indian children often have difficulty grasping the completely different concepts of the white man's world. The tribe hopes to have a voice in the programming of the school, so that it may attempt to reconcile these differences, and provide a modern education for the children without a loss of interest in their own culture.

Many tasks must be done in order to bring the prosperity the tribe seeks, but the task is not insuperable. After the long night, the dawn is coming, and the Chemehuevi people are determined that it shall not be a false dawn. □

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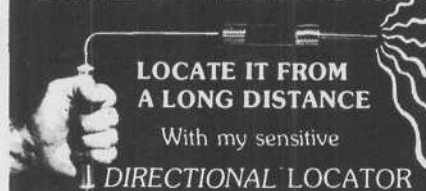
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Desert Plant Life

by JIM CORNETT

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WASHINGTON FAN PALM

THE MOST conspicuous feature of the desert oases is the magnificent Washington Fan Palm (*Washingtonia filifera*). Found in both California and Arizona, this tree has some amazing attributes which are little known to the weekend desert explorer.

For instance, if one were to set fire to one of these trees (and unfortunately many thoughtless persons have) the entire plant would be engulfed by flames. Certainly this is no surprise. Yet if we returned one year later the newly sprouted leaves would indicate that the tree was still alive. Fan palms are resistant to fire, which must be chalked up as an evolutionary success story. Scientists have not adequately explained this phenomenon but evolution and this tree have joined forces to resist man's intrusion and the havoc he wreaks with fire.

To date scores of these majestic trees have been set afire by mindless individuals destroying the virgin beauty of these plants forever. It is only by evolu-

tionary luck that the palms, for the most part, are able to renew their growth and unload their seed burdens each year even after the fiery holocaust.

Occasionally the seeds which have fallen to the ground are eaten by a frequent oasis visitor, the coyote. Coyotes often dine upon plant material and the fan palm seed has just enough fleshy covering to entice this common desert resident. The coyote swallows the seed and unknowingly begins one of the dispersal processes of the palm.

The fruit portion of the seed is worn away by the action of the digestive juices in the coyote's stomach. As he wanders over his exceedingly large range, at some point he voids the seed which is now ready to germinate as a result of its intestinal travels. If the seed is dropped in a place where there is standing water, or at least underground water within a few feet of the ground's surface, a fan palm may arise and perhaps be the initiator of a new oasis. □

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Rambling on Rocks

by
**GLENN and
MARTHA VARGAS**

THE NEW MOHS SCALE: Will It Replace the Old?

IN OUR past ten columns, we discussed the ten Mohs hardness scale standards. We talked about the minerals in regard to their usefulness as hardness indicators, giving our feelings as to accuracy, ease of use, etc. In most cases, the statements were our own; in a few, we echoed the views of others.

Regardless of whose thoughts were presented, there has been some dissatisfaction with the hardness scale. Surprisingly, most of the grumbling came from professional mineralogists. Virtually none came from the amateur who studies minerals for the sheer enjoyment of it.

If the professionals were not satisfied, even in a small number, it would be expected that a revised or new scale would appear. It has arrived, in the form of a scale that replaces some of the old stan-

dards, and is extended beyond the usual ten standards. We list it below, with the new ones indicated by an asterisk (*).

Hardness	Mineral
1	Talc
2	Halite*
3	Galena*
4	Fluorite
5	Scheelite*
6	Magnetite*
7	Quartz
8	Topaz
9	Corundum
10	Titanium carbide*
15	Diamond

The standards of this revised scale were chosen very carefully. The basis for each was according to a formula (which we will not show) that took into account a number of factors. The most important of these are; The strength of the bond between atoms (and thus the molecules also); the repulsion of various atoms to each other under varying conditions; the interatomic distance in each molecule; and the degree of packing of the atoms.

This is very technical and most of the factors are difficult to determine without sophisticated equipment. Thus, any fine determinations of what hardness any mineral should be will have to be done by learned mineralogists, and be accepted by the amateur.

To correctly use the scale, the scratching must be done on a certain crystal face or cleavage face of the standard mineral. As we understand it, using the standard to scratch the unknown would not be accurate. Much of this will not be readily accepted by the amateur. The professional may readily accept the new scale, but probably not quickly offer it in writing.

This leaves the amateur more or less where he was before, using a hardness scale that is very usable, even though slightly inaccurate. We feel, at the moment, that the situation will stay almost as it has always been, and any changes will be slow in coming.

The basis for our thinking comes from past as well as present and future mineral books. The amateur mineralogist has used a number of good books over the years. Some of these are classics, and have been sold in large numbers of copies. The so-called "bible" of the mineralogist has been *The Textbook of Min-*

erology, by Dana, as revised by Ford. The number of copies that have been sold we cannot determine, but it must be in the millions.

The second book in popularity is *A Field Guide to Rocks and Minerals*, by Pough. Dr. Pough is a personal friend, and he tells us he has sold better than a million copies. Dana's book at the time of publication was exceptionally complete, but somewhat technical. Pough's book is not as complete, but talks in the language of the amateur. Both books are priced well within the budget of the amateur. There are other books in these two classes that we will not mention, but they are excellent books.

In the year 1944, the first volume of a projected three volume work appeared. This was the revision of another of Dana's books, *The System of Mineralogy*. Since that date, the second volume has appeared (1951), and a change in plans took place. Volume III was split and contains only the quartz minerals. This appeared in 1962, with the balance of the minerals (silicates) still to be covered in Volume IV. The three volumes are very complete, but have the glaring deficiency of not covering the silicates. The complete present set is high priced.

The old Mohs scale was used in the three volumes, and we doubt very much if Volume IV, when it appears, will use the new one.

Over the past ten or more years, mineralogists have found themselves short of mineral information. Many new minerals have been discovered that were not listed in the books available. No new comprehensive books had appeared for 20 years. Avid amateurs were forced to look for information in many obscure places.

Very recently, this scarcity has been broken with the introduction of a fine new book, *The Encyclopedia of Minerals*, by Roberts, Rapp and Weber. It is quite high priced, but at the time of publication (late 1974) it contained all of the then known minerals (over 2200). It includes about 1000 color photographs, and can be considered to be the last work, from a mineralogical standpoint.

This new book uses the old Mohs scale. If it becomes popular, which we definitely expect, the acceptance and popularity of the new Mohs scale will be pushed further ahead in time.

Regardless of the above situations,

and any other circumstances that may work against the new scale, we will in future columns discuss the new minerals that are shown with an asterisk (*).

We might make a few general statements regarding the minerals that are common to both scales. We are a bit surprised that talc remains as Number 1. We would have expected it to be replaced because of some variation due to inclusions of harder particles in many specimens. Evidently this had little effect. We do wonder a bit, however, as to how one can be sure what face is being scratched on a mineral that is a decomposition product from a number of different minerals!

The presence of fluorite on the new scale did not surprise us in any way. We feel it is a good one, as it shows the same characteristics on all faces.

We are elated that quartz, topaz, and corundum remain as 7, 8, and 9 respectively. If these had been changed, we would no doubt have rejected the new scale. These three, as we noted in our past columns, are very well known, and have become so ingrained in the minds of mineralogists and gem cutters that erasing them would have been impossible.

The addition of titanium carbide, a synthetic material, as Number 10 interests us very much. We will discuss it in a later column.

The important thing that happened to Number 10 on the new scale is that diamond was removed, and assigned to Number 15, with no intervening numbers and standards. This gap, even though appearing peculiar, fits our thinking very nicely. We have long felt that difference between corundum at 9 and diamond at 10 was far too great in comparison to the difference between any other two adjacent standards. The creation of a gap had not occurred to us. There are those that will criticize this gap, but we feel that this was the only solution.

We really do not have many reservations concerning the new scale, with the possible exception that we, as with most people, do not really want to make any great change. We are somewhat relieved with the prospect that any change will be slow, if there is any change at all. The situations mentioned above, regarding mineral books, might indicate that we are correct. ☐

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OFF-ROAD VEHICLE PLAN

THE CALIFORNIA DESERTS CANNOT CONTINUE TO HOST THE TEEMING RECREATIONISTS WITHOUT LOSS OF ANIMAL AND PLANT LIFE AND NATURAL RESOURCES. EVERYONE WHO USES THE DESERT SHOULD BE AWARE OF THE PLAN AND THE VARIOUS USES OF DESIGNATED AREAS.

CONTRARY TO the belief of off-road vehicle enthusiasts, only a small portion of the Southern California Desert has been totally closed to vehicle use.

The vast majority of the desert is still open, although there are areas where vehicle use has been restricted to existing and designated roads.

The areas that have been permanently closed, for the most part, are small areas containing unique features worth preserving. These include areas such as the interior of the Turtle Mountains, which is practically inaccessible to begin with. This area contains high scenic values dominated by the Twin Mopah Peaks, colorful geologic formations, rare big-horn sheep and natural springs.

The interior of the Orocopia Mountains also has been closed for similar reasons. To the south, in the middle of the Yuha Desert, a small section has been closed to preserve an unusual stand of crucifixion thorn cactus.

Other small areas also have been permanently closed. These areas can be noted on the accompanying map.

This map was recently released by the Bureau of Land Management and is available at any Bureau office.

According to the map, there are a total of 19 areas set aside for off-road vehicle competition. These areas appear to be carefully planned to provide proximity to all large metropolitan areas throughout Southern California.

The green areas of the map are totally without restriction—other than simple responsibility on the part of the driver.

Most of the green areas depicted already see high vehicles use and, according to Bureau officials, there is nothing within these areas that can be damaged.

The blue, orange and yellow all depict restrictions in varying degrees. The blue areas are areas which ultimately will become recreation spots. Vehicular use is restricted for the time being to existing roads, but additional roads will be designed as funds become available for recreation development.

The orange area also depicts area where vehicle use is confined to existing roads and trails. The yellow areas fall within the same category.

The squares in the map depict six-mile-square areas; thus it is easy to see that not much of the desert has come in the total restriction category.

But even in those areas where use is

restricted to existing roads, it is permitted to park off the road to camp, rock-hound or go hiking, where not otherwise prohibited as explained under "Notes."

This map is the culmination of hearings that have taken place throughout the state for the past several years. It is an effort to make the desert useful to as many persons and groups as possible without bringing total destruction to everything worth preserving, according to BLM officials.

As time passes, there will be certain changes in some sections as recreation developments progresses.

One Bureau spokesman said that additional closures are not anticipated at this time; but future closures will depend on what people do. Unnecessary damage cannot be tolerated. ☐

Actual map size is 19" x 25" with brief description of the 71 numbered areas on the reverse side. This map is available by writing:

**Neil Pfulb,
Desert Plan Director
Bureau of Land Management
1695 Spruce Street
Riverside, California 92507**

CALIFORNIA DESERT VEHICLE PROGRAM

(BLM'S INTERIM CRITICAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM FOR VEHICLE USE ON THE CALIFORNIA DESERT)

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OPEN

RESTRICTED

SPECIAL DESIGN

DESIGNATED ROADS AND TRAILS

EXISTING VEHICLE ROUTES

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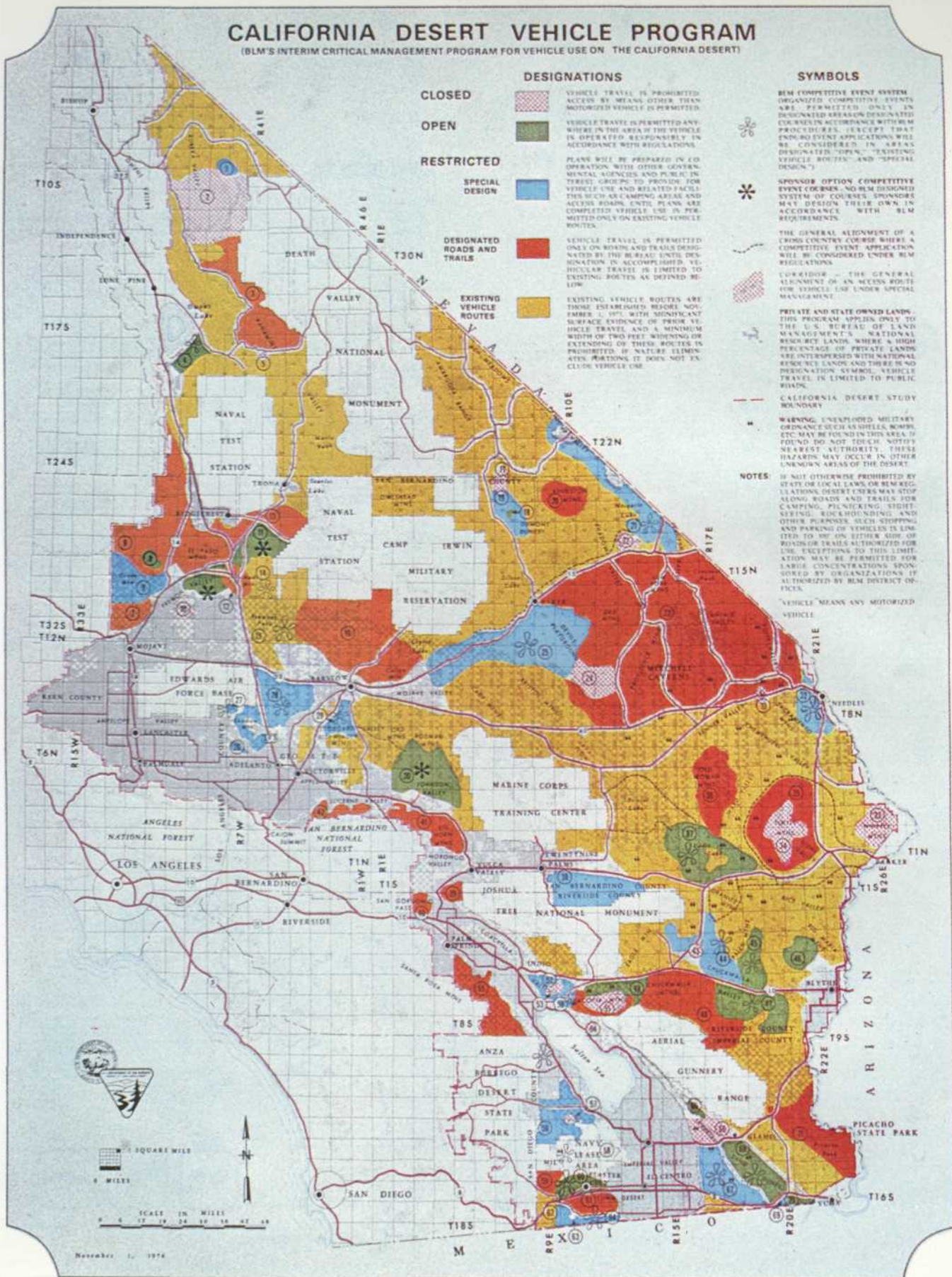
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VEHICLE MEANS ANY MOTORIZED VEHICLE



Letters to the Editor

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Single Blanket Prospector . . .

That anyone would be hauling around "high grade ore specimens found at Colorado's Camp Bird Mine many years before." ("Crazy Jake's Gold," *Desert*, Jan. '75), not only suggests idiocy, but places Watergate-type credibility upon the rest of the story, of course.

Those of us who knew 'ol Charlie (Seldom Seen Slim) would have to take exception to ol' Joe Beller's inference that Slim was both stupid and naive. Slim lived and died like, apparently, Beller would like to. May Beller beller his degradations elsewhere—not on the pages of your erstwhile publication.

DESERT JOHN,
Goldfield, Nevada.

Treasure in Lilacs . . .

Those of us, who live in California, consider ourselves so fortunate to be able to enjoy our wonderful weather, our fascinating and intriguing deserts, our beaches and our mountains. Yet, every spring we from the mid-west and eastern states find ourselves longing for the sight and fragrance of lilacs. That is why I want to share an experience with all the readers of your wonderful *Desert Magazine*.

Last spring, my husband and I took the Beaumont Avenue turnoff, driving up towards Oak Glen. We were talking about our childhood days and how we used to go picking lilacs. Suddenly our car was filled with the fragrance of lilacs. We drove silently along for a few minutes, wondering if we were really smelling lilacs or were our memories so strong as to bring on the aroma.

Then we both saw beautiful lilacs growing on each side of the road. It was like going back in time. We enjoyed that beautiful sight all the way up to Oak Glen. The next day, we made a return trip with our grandchildren to introduce them to the beauty of lilacs.

If you want to enjoy the same experience, do take this ride around mid-April.

DOROTHY KLOVANICK,
Santa Ana, California.

More on UFOs . . .

Re the item about UFOs, at Giant Rock Airport near Landers, California, the man who runs the restaurant claims there have been 17 sightings at Giant Rock of UFOs.

GUY GIFFORD,
Los Angeles, California.

Calendar of Events

MARCH 1 & 2, Monrovia Rockhounds, Inc., 16th Annual Gem and Mineral Show, Masonic Temple, 204 West Foothill Blvd., Monrovia, Calif. 91016. Chairman: Norm Snow, 5746 N. Loma, Temple City, California. 91780

MARCH 8 & 9, Modesto Gem & Mineral Show of Mother Lode Mineral Society, Stanislaus County Fairgrounds, Turlock, Calif. Working exhibits, special exhibits, free parking, door prizes, food, camping.

MARCH 8 & 9, Anza-Borrego Fifth Annual Walk for Desert Gardens. Saturday 7:30 PM program at Campfire Center, park headquarters. Sunday, 11 AM, walk at Fonts Point off Borrego Salton Seaway. (S-22). Park dedication and celebration of Anza's trek in 1775. Bring camp chairs. Phone (714) 767-5311 or 236-7411.

MARCH 15-16, Hollywood Lapidary & Mineral Society Annual Show, Plummer Park, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles. Dealers, exhibits, demonstrations, refreshments. Free parking and admission.

MARCH 21-24, Shoshone Annual Desert Art Show, Shoshone, Calif. Opens noon Friday, March 21 and continues from 9 to 7 daily through Monday, March 24. Motel and camper/trailer accommodations available. Entry forms and further information from Shoshone Desert Art Show, Shoshone, Calif., 92384. Call (714) 852-4355.

MARCH 22 & 23, Bishop Belles & Beaux 11th Annual Bottle Workshop, Tri-County Fairgrounds, Bishop, Calif. Contact Bishop Belles & Beaux Bottle Club, Box 1475, Bishop, California 93514.

Report on the Indians . . .

Regarding Bill Mack's article in the January issue of *Desert*, about the reports on white Indians, I heard about white Indians some years ago and began tracing it down, though this is the first time I have heard of Welsh-speaking white Indians.

I ran down every clue I could think of, including the possibility that the Vikings who settled in Greenland and might have put some of their people on this continent to live, and they may have mixed with our American Indians.

I finally hit pay dirt when I talked with a man working in the library in Claremont, California. He gave me a book to read about the Lewis & Clark Exploration Expedition. According to that book, they spent the winter with the Mandan Indians, but never hinted that any of them had white blood.

They had a Negro slave with them, and when the Expedition was over, the government gave him his freedom and a small pension. Newspaper and magazine writers flocked around him for details of the trip. They gave him money and liquor to keep him talking, and when he was drinking his tongue loosened and by his own admission he told things that were not true—including the story that the Mandan Indians were white. When he was cornered, he admitted that they did not see a single white Indian.

In the book I read, that statement was not in the regular text, but was in one of the references in the back of the book.

I am no longer young, neither is my memory, so try as I might, I can't recall the author of that book, nor its exact title. Those interested could soon check all the books on the Lewis & Clark Expedition.

MITTYLENE BURROSS,
Glendora, California.

MARCH 30, Annual Easter Sunrise Service in Red Rock Canyon Recreation Park at 5:48 A.M. Plenty of parking spaces for cars, campers, buses and trailers. Public restrooms and water available. Service sponsored by the Red Rock Easter Sunrise Service Assoc., the Mojave Ministerial Assoc., and the Mojave Chamber of Commerce. Located 25 miles north of Mojave on State Highway 14. Dress warmly and plan to attend.

APRIL 5 & 6, Silvery Colorado River Rock Club, Inc., 8th Annual "River Gemboree" Show, Mohave Jr. High School Auditorium, Hancock Rd., at Lakeside Dr., three miles south of Bullhead City, Ariz. Show Chairman, Ray Morrison, Box 2909, Riviera, Ariz. 86442.

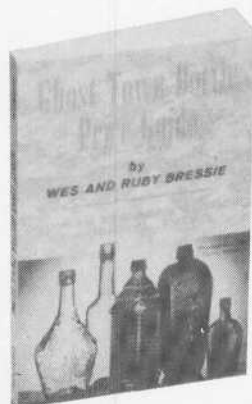
APRIL 12 & 13, Northside Gem and Hobby Club Annual Show, Wendell High School Gym, Wendell, Idaho. Show will include non-competitive rock, mineral, antique and hobby exhibits. Demonstrations on various subjects during show. Contact Albert Moody, Rt. 1, Gooding, Idaho 83330.

APRIL 12 & 13, 21st Annual Paradise of Gems presented by the Paradise Gem and Mineral Club, in the Memorial Building on the Skyway, Paradise, California. Dealers and food. Chairman: Everett Pittenger, Box 692, Paradise, Calif. 95969. Dealer space filled.

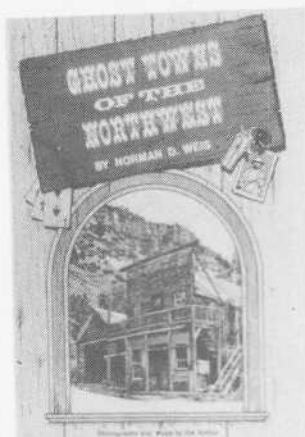
APRIL 12 & 13, 21st Annual Fast Camel Cruise stage by the Sareea Al Jamel 4WD Club of India near Graham Pass in the little Chuckawalla Mountains 70 miles northeast of Indio. Open to 4WD vehicles, the weekend outing offers two trips, one for experienced drivers and another for bigger rigs and new off-road vehicle owners. Skill tests and family games, pit barbecue. Write: Box 526, Indio, Calif. 92201.

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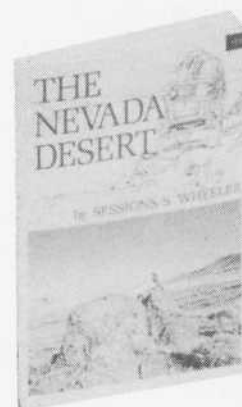
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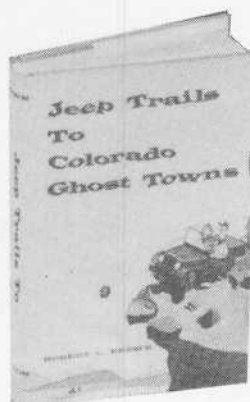
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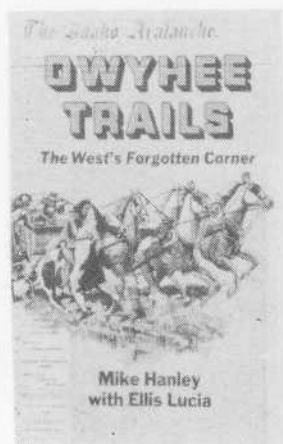
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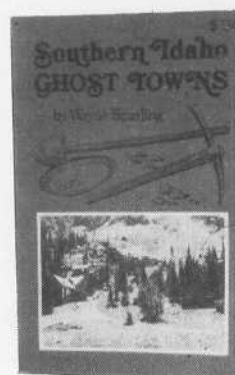
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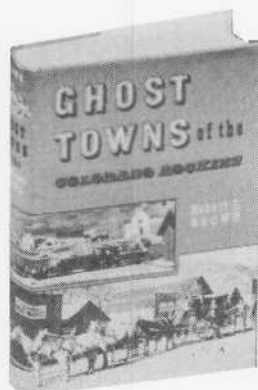
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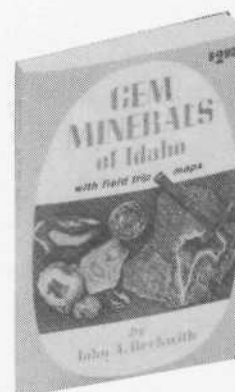
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